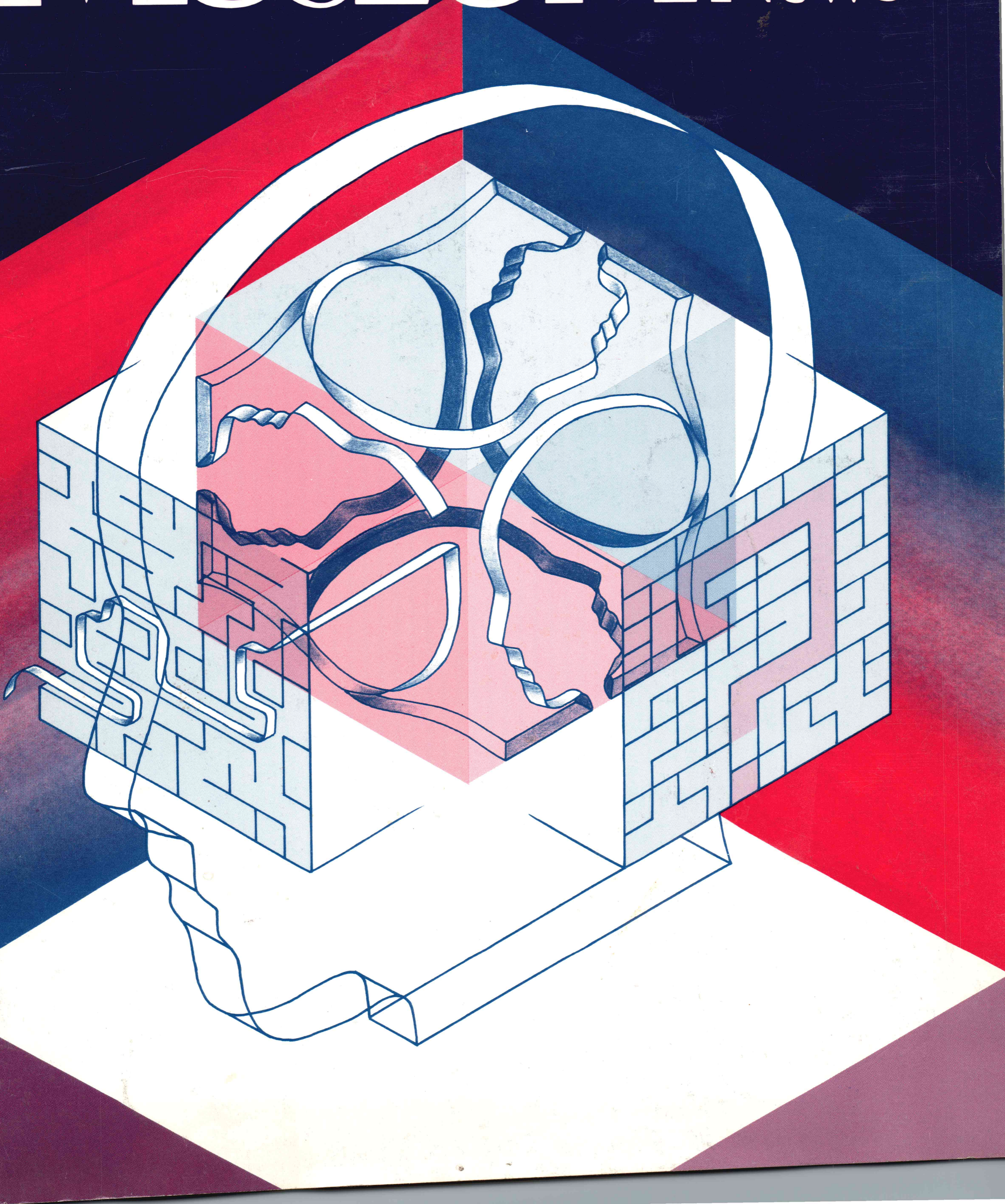
# MUSEUM News

June 1984



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MUSEUM News

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Cover
Leadership—what's ahead? The nature of leadership in museums grows more complex as issues in museum management proliferate and the challenges museums face elude easy resolution. What kinds of leaders will be required for the 21st century, and how can they make museums work better? See the feature articles beginning on page 28 for some answers and possible avenues through the maze.

ARTICLES



DEPARTMENTS

# FROM THE DIRECTOR

There is a very real need for informed and thoughtful discussion of cultural policy in the United States. Ironically, the publication last year of a book that singles out "the arts" as unworthy beneficiaries of a variety of tax laws makes that need all the more pressing. *Patrons Despite Themselves: Taxpayers and Arts Policy,* by Alan J. Feld, Michael O'Hare and J. Mark Davidson Schuster, fails to address, even superficially, the substantive policy issues relating to the goals and purposes of cultural institutions and how they relate to the beneficial tax treatment accorded them as well as other not-for-profit organizations.

Why do the authors single out tax policy and "the arts" for examination? Based on 1973 statistics, total charitable contributions are estimated by the authors to be $17.5 billion. Of that, one-fourth ($4.4 billion) constitutes "taxes forgone," or revenue that would have gone to the federal treasury had the income been taxed rather than taken as deductions (the authors' term "tax expenditure" is unduly biased). Cultural institutions (which they define as including not only performing and visual arts institutions but museums of science and history, the humanities and public television—note how "the arts" are broadened, but this is never acknowledged) receive slightly less than 2 percent ($320 million) of the total charitable contributions. The authors assert that of that amount $181.6 million (or 56 percent) represent taxes forgone. It's a small enough amount, but the authors assert that because donors to cultural institutions are generally in higher tax brackets, the percentage of taxes forgone is higher than in other areas of giving, like health or social welfare. They conclude that the wealthy, by their donations, are controlling culture, while the rest of us are footing the bill through indirect tax subsidies, like property tax exemptions for cultural institutions, and direct tax expenditures, like grant programs at the National Endowment for the Arts. Their statistics clearly show that donor characteristics and benefits, as well as the percentage of taxes forgone, are not substantially different for cultural institutions than for educational institutions. Yet they have not concluded that the content of education is controlled by the wealthy, nor have they questioned the basis, shared with cultural institutions, upon which tax benefits for education have been provided.

By focusing their attention on the issues of control and power, the authors overlook the public policy goals that gave rise to our current system of tax benefits and incentives. By insisting that everything can be defined, prescribed and dispensed with by economic analysis, they miss the essential questions: How important is it for our society to foster creativity on the part of its citizens? What is the public interest in encouraging individuals to donate the evidences of our cultural and natural heritage to institutions that accept the responsibility to hold them in trust, care for them and make them available for present and future generations? How do these goals rank alongside goals for education, social welfare or religion?

On the basis of their analysis of cultural institutions—and a poor one at that—the authors present a set of sweeping recommendations for all not-for-profit organizations. Their most significant proposal is that the federal charitable deduction be replaced by a tax credit of 30 percent. This is hardly a new idea, and one that may be deserving of serious consideration by the entire philanthropic community.

But that consideration must be informed. In discussing grant procedures and the costs of security, storage and conservation of collections, the authors display an ignorance of Arts Endowment policy and museum operations generally. Thus the need for intelligent discussion of tax laws and the issues behind them is all the more pressing. The best we can hope for from *Patrons Despite Themselves* is that it will prompt knowledgeable individuals in both the private and public sectors to a careful consideration of cultural policy. Our nation's concern for artistic creativity and the well-being of its cultural institutions are at stake.

Lawrence L. Reger

# LETTERS

## Anniversary Issue

MUSEUM NEWS of February '84 is a *great* accomplishment. It gives a splendid overview of the growth of the museum profession in this country, and the parallel development of the American Association of Museums as a service organization. I have watched the association since I became executive secretary of the Seattle Art Institute—now the Seattle Art Museum—in December of 1927, and have been a member since that time. Congratulations.

JOHN DAVIS HATCH
*Sunny Side Acres*
*Lenox, Massachusetts*

I read MUSEUM NEWS with more and more interest each time a new issue comes forth. Particularly enlightening and noteworthy is your February 1984 issue, and your own Editor's Notes, which discusses the need for museum people to write and express strong opinions. I cannot agree *more* that more animated testing and challenging of assumptions are needed. I am pleased to see this critical topic raised, and in such a prominent place within MUSEUM NEWS. The articles which followed your notes, likewise, presented fascinating and illuminating perspectives, past and present.

Thank you so much for providing an active and stimulating forum for my students, myself and for museums across the country.

CONSTANCE B. FULLER
*Art Education Department and Exhibitions*
*Massachusetts College of Art*
*Boston, Massachusetts*

Thank you for a very attractive and interesting 60th anniversary issue of MUSEUM NEWS. I was particularly interested in the article by Alan Shestack on "The Director," originally written in 1978 with a 1984 "Afterword."

Shestack does a good job of presenting both sides of the argument as to whether an art museum director should come from the administrative or the artistic world but concludes that "judgment in artistic matters, broad experience in the visual arts and the ability to maintain high standards in collecting and museum programming remain the basic requirements of a good director."

I must disagree with the idea that basic requirements need not include administrative skills. It is somewhere between difficult and impossible to maintain high standards in collecting and programming without financial stability and the skills to make the best use of resources. These skills are not learned in art history courses, nor are they necessarily intuitive. It is possible to pick them up in on-the-job training, but that can be costly to the individual and the institution.

Having wrestled with the question off and on for the past 20 years, and intensely for three years while planning the curriculum of the arts administration program at Sangamon State University, I have reached the conclusion that a highly skilled manager with a keen interest in and sympathy for the disciplines can, by surrounding himself with competent staff, do a good job of running a museum. I suspect that the model for the future will be something like a bachelor's degree in art history or one of the other disciplines, topped off with a master's in business administration. To me that makes sense.

DAVID C. SENNEMA
*Director*
*South Carolina State Museum*
*Columbia, South Carolina*

I think that the February 1984 issue of MUSEUM NEWS is the best I have seen (in almost 20 years). Thanks—and congratulations!

E. ALVIN GERHARDT, JR.
*Executive Director*
*Rocky Mount Historical Association*
*Piney Flats, Tennessee*

## More on Museum Security

The letter from Joseph M. Chapman published in MUSEUM NEWS (December 1983) incorrectly stated that the Cincinnati Art Museum had been robbed at gunpoint. Chapman may be referring to the robbery at the Taft Museum, Cincinnati, in 1973.

In any case, his statement was erroneous and does a disservice to the security program and personnel of the Cincinnati Art Museum.

MILLARD F. ROGERS, JR.
*Director*
*Cincinnati Art Museum*
*Cincinnati, Ohio*

## The Most Important Benefit

I thought I would send you this note to thank you, your staff, and the contributing writers for a most informative December 1983 edition of MUSEUM NEWS. I finished reading it this morning and I thoroughly enjoyed the many ideas and examples that were presented on the subject of museum publications. MUSEUM NEWS is, to me, the most important benefit we receive from our association with the American Association of Museums (we have been an accredited member since 1978).

MARK B. HOLTON
*Curator*
*Confederation Centre Art Gallery and Museum*
*Charlottetown*
*Prince Edward Island*
*Canada*

## One More Moment of Revenge

From one editor to another, may I commend you on your opening comments in the December 1983 issue of MUSEUM NEWS.

You made me laugh (translate that "guffaw") with the phrase "I appreciate a good editor" as a secret code for "Keep your pencil off my perfect prose." How true that is even when, after the dust has settled, a few of the more enlightened come to look at the finished product as indeed their "perfect prose." And, of course, that attitude is the ultimate aim of any proper editor, who really doesn't require praise and adulation but would just as soon forgo the slings and arrows.

Apropos of the subject, perhaps you might get one small chuckle from my piece of doggerel in the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History newsletter when I retired in 1980 as editor

## LETTERS

and curator of collections (I, too, would lowercase "Bible" if I could get by with it):

Editors are a sorry lot.  
Just ask the scribe whose words were not so hot.  
Or better still, inquire of those  
Who huffed and puffed and brought forth purple prose.

And yet they fill a certain notch,  
If only to forestall the lurking botch.  
Whatever slot from which they plot,  
Editors are a sorry lot.

AUBYN KENDALL  
*Glen Rose, Texas*

### Hallmark Cares

Your December 1983 edition of MUSEUM NEWS has presented me with quite a dilemma. While we at Hallmark are certainly flattered that you chose our slogan "When You Care Enough to Send the Very Best" to headline an article about the importance of quality, it is my responsibility to police unauthorized uses of this slogan. I am certain that you intended no harm in adopting our slogan, yet that does not alter my responsibility....

Therefore, I have enclosed a copy of the most recent edition of our company magazine and I refer you to the article on page 14, which discusses the problems of protecting one's trademark. It is my hope that by communicating magazine to magazine, so to speak, you will agree not to use the slogan again. Hallmark will then be able to forgive your one-time unauthorized use.

BARRY M. KATZ  
*Assistant General Counsel*  
*Hallmark Cards Incorporated*  
*Kansas City, Missouri*

**The editors reply**

First, let me congratulate you on your taste in reading material. The sheer fact that MUSEUM NEWS found its way to your desk is extremely flattering. Our use of the Hallmark slogan was an oversight, and I appreciate your bringing it to my attention. We are usually careful about such things as "Thermos" and "Xerox," but we did not think to extend our vigilance to "When you care enough...." I assure you that we will not use your slogan again in our magazine. Δ

Museum design—from exquisite galleries to mechanical systems—requires exceptional attention to detail. Every program is unique, demanding a close working relationship between architect and museum staff.

For the *National Gallery of Art,* Keyes Condon Florance recently designed extensive renovations to the West Building ground floor, providing new exhibit spaces, sales shop and garden cafe. In addition, technical support facilities were expanded and environmental control systems modernized.

Keyes Condon Florance also had principal responsibility for programming, design and construction administration of the *Smithsonian Institution Museum Support Center,* one of the largest and most technologically advanced facilities of its kind.

The firm's current museum work includes restoration of the historic U.S. Pension Building for its reuse as the *National Building Museum;* and the renovation of a 1907 Masonic Temple to house the *National Museum of Women in the Arts.*

*The National Gallery of Art*

*Above:* New arches, flooring and sculpture niche beyond restored travertine opening.
*Below:* One of three relocated and restored Widener Collection Period Rooms.

COMMENTARY

# Growing Pains: The Maturation of Museums

MILTON J. BLOCH

Conversation overheard at a museums conference:

**Jane:** *"Did you hear that the directorship of the Cheese Museum is open again?"*

**Jack:** *"Again? That makes three directors in four years!"*

**Jane:** *"Right. But it sure pays well, and it's a nice collection."*

**Jack:** *"So what? Who would want to walk into that buzz saw?"*

**Jane:** *"Not I. They can't seem to get it together at all."*

**Jack:** *"You can say that again – and it's too bad. They've got a good building and a lot of potential."*

How many times have you heard something similar to this exchange! If you've been to enough gatherings of museum people, the answer is probably, "Far too often." But what is going on here anyway? The museum in question obviously has an ample budget, a good collection and decent building. It also has a problem keeping an administrator. One immediately wonders about the sanity of the trustees. After all, one director may have died or retired; the next may have been a poor choice. But *three* changes within four years? Could all of these changes have been simple misfortune? After all, these directors were not won in a lottery. They were carefully selected from many candidates after long and thoughtful searches. No wonder something smells rotten at the Cheese Museum!

MILTON J. BLOCH is director of the Mint Museum in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Scene 2, same conference:

**Sally:** *"Hi, Sam, how's it going?"*

**Sam:** *"I don't know. It seems so hard to get my board to do anything."*

**Sally:** *"Lazy bunch, huh?"*

**Sam:** *"Not really. It's just that some of them won't let go. They talk about progress, but when it comes to some real change they just drag their feet."*

**Sally:** *"I know the feeling."*

**Sam:** *"Yeah. Of course we're a small outfit, but there's plenty that can be done. And when I got there a couple of years ago, I thought they really wanted some results."*

**Sally:** *"Sure. If they won't let you get something moving, then why did they hire you? Isn't anything happening at all?"*

**Sam:** *"Well, yes, something is happening. We're developing a pretty nasty split on our board over what I should be trying to accomplish."*

In this case it is a small or possibly new museum with limited resources. Sam sounds like a young professional at the early stages of his administrative career, eager and obviously frustrated. The agreements he believed he had with the board for making the progress he envisions are not being honored, and he can't seem to get the ball rolling. His pressure for progress is opening fissures in the board, and the road ahead looks rough if not impassable. This is a far different problem from the mess at the Cheese Museum. Or is it?

During my 17 years of firsthand acquaintance with museums, I have had the opportunity to examine a number of these situations closely and to reflect upon the factors that seem to be invariably responsible for producing problems like those emerging from these two conversations. Based on my observations, I have come to believe in a "maturation" theory of museums. This theory may help to explain some of the problematic board-director dynamics shared by so many museums. In comparing notes with representatives of other cultural agencies — operas, symphony orchestras and dance groups — I have found that this theory may apply to all civic organizations. I will seek refuge from the perils of generalization, however, and stick to museums.

The thesis is that museums follow a predictable or identifiable pattern of growth somewhat parallel to that of any organism or organization. This growth proceeds from infancy to maturity. As with differing species in differing environs, however, this march toward maturation may proceed slowly, rapidly or erratically. In addition, an institution can be arrested in any level of development until some combination of for-

## COMMENTARY

tune, disaster or incentive again impels it along the road toward maturity. I have given the stages common names. These stages all boil down to the quality of the relationship between the staff and board.

STAGE 1: INFANT. The infant organization is familiar to all of us. In every geographical area there will be one of those ubiquitous groups of "concerned citizens" who decide that their community would be greatly enriched by the addition of a dance group, art center or symphony orchestra. Perhaps an art collection has been offered if only four walls can be found. In any case, a charter and bylaws are written, a corporation is formed, a building is given, purchased or rented and a museum is born. These are the days of endless meetings, high excitement and boundless optimism. They are also the babysitting weeks or years of awful groping and grappling. At this stage of development the cash contributions of board members are likely to be a major source of operating funds. Trustees will naturally be found on all committees, as volunteers for every project, and serving in various staff-equivalent positions ranging from director to janitor to fund raiser. As with any infant, the board in its role as mother cannot be separated from the newborn; the two are very much a single entity. It often happens that at this point the board *is* the staff.

STAGE 2: JUVENILE. As the fledgling museum grows — or simply endures — its unceasing demands, which were originally embraced with excitement and enthusiasm, are likely to become wearing. Furthermore, even a modicum of growth may bring demands that simply cannot be met consistently by the board or other volunteers. At this point one or more salaried staff members may be hired to deal with the unrelenting requirements of museum affairs. Sometimes a trustee or volunteer is selected to perform for a salary what he or she had been doing without pay. Although some organizations remain infants despite this development, the salaried staff often signals the transition from infancy to the juvenile stage of development. This stage is characterized by a change in the board's perception of what it will take to address an ongoing future and, more important, who will run the operation and how. How well the board assesses its role in this period will determine the severity of the growing pains that inevitably attend all juveniles.

The juvenile stage has provided countless directors with entry-level positions, some of whom remember their first experience vividly if not fondly. An aspiring museum administrator entering a juvenile institution is likely to find trustees who are at once creating and running programs, making important donations to the operating fund, chairing key committees, serving as quasi-staff members and formulating policies for all these activities. Some of these trustees are eager to throw their heavy

## COMMENTARY

load entirely on the back of the director, while others cannot be persuaded to give over to the administration those controls that properly belong there.

Not every new director fares badly under these circumstances, but many will complain of the difficulty in getting things done, of resistance to implementing professional methods and standards, of reluctance to expanding or changing programs or exhibit directions. There also may be a trampling of the director's prerogatives and endless revisions of programs and ideas. Some trustees may be fearful of losing their influence, prestige or control. The board may also be in a position in which it cannot afford the withdrawal of one or more trustee's funds or favor and must yield to demands it might otherwise resist. The director may have been promised options by several enlightened trustees who then find they cannot deliver the authority to carry them out. The board may split into factions that do and do not endorse certain objectives of the director. At this stage, telephone campaigns and character assassination are not totally unknown.

The problem, in short, is the confusion of roles and duties. It is not yet clear *who* is really running the museum and often, what is worse, *who should be* running it. The question itself may not even surface because none of those involved in the tangle know how to pose it. Even if the question were discussed roundly and fairly, the wherewithal to rearrange the pieces of the puzzle in any significantly different way may not exist. Funds may be unavailable for needed staff or to unseat a trustee whose influence stems from his or her donations. Also, trustees are usually good friends who may not wish to offend each other by assuming unpopular positions. Clearly it is a difficult time, requiring patience and tact from all involved.

STAGE 3: ADOLESCENT. A museum may remain in the juvenile mode of operation for many years, perhaps decades, unaware that it has any real problem. The museum may grow quite large, and with it the staff, yet the waters may remain relatively calm. This may be due to the fact that tradition holds sway over the operation, or perhaps there is a particularly tractable director and staff or the status quo may simply be a condition of the director's job.

In any event, the stasis eventually breaks. The director dies or retires, a new board elevates its sights or an expansion program calls long-accepted modes of operation into question. This can be meat-grinder time for new directors, who will get mangled in the thrashing transition from the juvenile stage to the mature stage. We have heard the all-too-prophetic phrase, "I guess they'll have to chew up a few more directors before that museum settles down to serious business." Why? Because the museum has grown into a bigger body without acquiring a bigger mind. The new director may no longer be a pliable newcomer at the entry level. He takes the board's new goals even more seriously and energetically than the trustees do. The director wants to take this good raw material and mold it into professional-quality stuff. And he's probably eager to get on with it, and soon. He will probably resent trustees compromising the staff or trying to run the day-to-day business. He will recite loudly and often the catechism of separation between staff duties and board responsibilities. Even acne cannot compete with this condition for the promise of sheer adolescent discomfort.

What happens next will determine the pattern of the museum thereafter. Either the board will dispose of this irritating individual (and perhaps several successors), or it will proceed to stage 4.

STAGE 4: MATURE. Organizational maturity comes when the roles of all the players in the game are properly sorted, correctly assigned and well understood. The board is making policy and, one hopes, money. It has hired a competent director and listens when he talks sense. It allows him to exercise full authority within the general guidelines it must provide. But most important of all, it sees this separation as necessary and essential to the health of the organization and not as an unfortunate compromise to be tolerated and, when necessary, subverted.

An ideal trustee never asks a director to compromise his position by pressing for favors or lobbying a viewpoint at either the staff or board level. An

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## COMMENTARY

ideal director never dilutes his authority by requesting board decisions for matters that are under his jurisdiction. A good staff will not tolerate sorties into its business by trustees, and responsible trustees will not wish to launch them. Cooperation and separation reign sublime.

But this is *not* an ideal world, and the balance changes from time to time, whether subtly or drastically, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Organizational maturity can be lost or stolen in the same way that imbalance, stress or insecurity can compromise a person's maturity. Maturity is not obtained once and forever like a social security or tax-exempt number. As with liberty, the price of maturity, for people as well as institutions, is vigilance. It does not "come with the territory," and it can slip away like so much sand through the fingers of the unwitting.

It is hoped that this description of the museum maturation process will serve as one kind of template or yardstick to gauge the development of the museums you may work with or care about or are considering as a new place of employment. For instance, in the two conversations invented to introduce this article, the larger museum has entered adolescence, while the smaller museum is wading through juvenile problems; both are still wrestling with board-staff roles, still defending turf and egos. The characteristics described must be confined to the realm of observation, not criticism, because all museums must go through these stages, as well as the others, some more than once. These are rites of passage, admitting many detours but few shortcuts. In these two cases we may be seeing the warning signs or even the first upheaval of hot and steamy volcanic forces. Yet not every mountain grows out of fiery cataclysm. Some rise with certainty and majesty far above their modest levels of origin, making the necessary and unavoidable transitions with grace and dignity. We can only hope that our institutions are among them. Δ

# MEDIA

# Museums on the Air

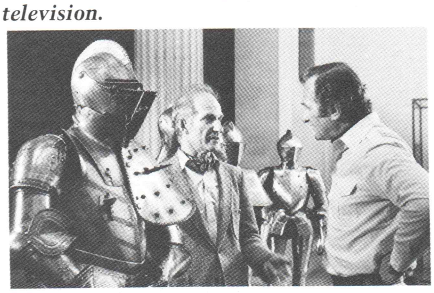
DAVID H. KATZIVE

On May 15, 1983, a *New York Times* television critique described a springtime arts program as a "high-toned failure," a production that was "just the kind of pretentious exercise that leaves bright minds numb... with a reverence bordering on catatonia."[1] This has been the sorry fate of a long succession of attempts to put museums and the visual arts on television. Too often we are buried in clichés — pompous and cultured voices or hosts, classical music, cloying and worshipful commentary about priceless treasures, sculpture on turntables, paintings floating in black voids shot from slides, breathless treatments that rapidly shift from one subject to the next lest the viewer become bored.

***Animal, vegetable or mineral? Guests on "What in the World" identified strange objects and discussed their authenticity. The series was produced by WCAU and the University Museum, University of Pennsylvania.***

Since 1941 museums have been attempting to reach a broader audience by teaming up with the television industry. In that year, the Metropolitan Museum of Art brought armor into the CBS broadcast studios and initiated a series of discussion format programs with museum curators and staff. Then, as now, the museum profession was intrigued by the possibilities for public education and public relations that television offered. It appeared to be a medium that could further instructional goals and build a faithful audience. In 1942 a case for museums' use of television was articulated by Theodore L. Low in *The Museum as a Social Instrument,* a publication of the American Association of Museums. In this remarkably prescient essay, Low envisioned television as a force for extending a museum's missionary and didactic objectives.[2]

***"The Tournament," produced for ABC Video Enterprises in association with the Metropolitan Museum of Art, continues the Met's tradition of bringing armor to life on television.***



## National Broadcasts

A rare example of a good marriage of a museum and television was a unique series produced by WCAU and the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania in the early 1950s, "What in the World." Scholarship and connoisseurship were unself-consciously blended with a game-show format. Viewers were astounded by the brilliance of guests, seated around a table, who tried to identify an object placed before them — verifying its authenticity or attribu-

DAVID H. KATZIVE is a cultural programs development consultant for Creative Television Associates in Boston and president of Museum Television Production Services. He is vice-chairman of the AAM's Nonprint Media Committee and has chaired the AAM annual meeting's Museum Living Room since its inception in 1978.

tion or proclaiming it to be a clever forgery or crude fake. "Zoo Parade" was another successful series that sprang from the museum discipline. Its descendants can be seen today in such forms as "Wild Kingdom" or "Living Wild."

Television broadcasts that originate from art museums pose particularly difficult problems for the medium. It is almost impossible to make static objects, created for the human eye and meant to be seen in person, "work." Occasionally a skillful host will help a program along. Brian O'Doherty was host and writer for the successful series "Invitation to Art," out of WGBH and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, up until the early 1960s. The effectiveness of these programs had less to do with art than with O'Doherty's ability to make the half hours meaningful and entertaining. In subsequent years the Museum of Fine Arts sponsored "Museum Open House" with Russell Connor as host and then took the next logical step. With special funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities, it produced an even more ambitious series intended to treat ideas from the museum with the finest television production values possible. Entitled "Eye to Eye," the series was attractive looking, fast paced, full of surprises, but not too successful (according to the critics) because the choice of host and the disjointed style left even the most erudite viewer at loose ends.[3]

In recent years the Museum of Fine Arts' activity in the realm of broadcast television has lessened, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art has emerged as the museum most involved with television. Today the Met works on two different levels. Its Office of Film and Television, under the direction of Karl Katz, works with outside producers and broadcasters to create programming, usually for cable and public television, that generates enough revenue to be self-supporting.[4] In its education division, under the supervision of Thomas Newman, the museum is developing ideas for treatments of American art as a telecourse (under the auspices of a grant

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from the Annenberg School of Communications/Corporation for Public Broadcasting project).

In Washington, D.C., the Smithsonian Institution maintains an Office of Telecommunications to produce films primarily in conjunction with museum activities. These are not necessarily produced for broadcast purposes but will occasionally appear on television. The current series, "Smithsonian World," is a different situation altogether. Produced by Martin Carr and WETA, Washington, it is the most elaborate museum-based series ever to air. The approach is as breathtaking as the institution itself, covering multiple disciplines, each topic related to a general theme designated for each program. The series has made an admirable effort to reach general audiences by offering

*"Smithsonian World" crew on location in Puerto Rico, filming in a bamboo grove for the premiere, "Time and Light"*

introductory-level discussions. It also includes a dash of more specialized information in an attempt to hold on to the more sophisticated viewers. The result is public television that has a quality reminiscent of the *World Book Encyclopedia.*

It is worth noting that in virtually every case of a museum broadcast reaching a national television audience, the instigation of the project and the securing of funds originated not with the museum but with a producer or television entity. Considering the costs involved, this is not too surprising. In general, a single program, conceived from the start as a feature for national exposure, can have an out-of-pocket cost of at least $150,000, an average cost of $350,000 and peak costs in the neighborhood of $700,000.

The National Gallery of Art enjoys a somewhat different set of circumstances, allowing it to be one of the few institutions capable of self-production of national features. It offers an aggressive service through its Extension Programs Department. Films produced out of funds appropriated for this purpose in the congressional budget are provided at no cost to Public Broadcasting Service stations throughout America. Last year over 40 million people saw programs distributed in this manner.

The Metropolitan, the Smithsonian, the National Gallery, the American Museum of Natural History and the Museum of Modern Art are unique in their capacity to attract large-scale projects. They are frequently approached by

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independent producers with special ideas or projects to sell.

From the point of view of the museum profession, it would be revealing to study the impact of national TV programs on the general audiences who presumably watch them. It is a fair assumption that anybody who would watch a museum program on a public television station or a cable channel (instead of a movie or a sports event) is not the "average" American. These programs reach audiences that are already disposed to visit museums or join as members. A critical question for the museums is *who* are they really trying to reach and *what* are the most important messages they want to convey with these rather expensive efforts.

As far as the major networks are concerned, it would be a significant victory for *any* cultural enterprise (dance, music, theater, museums, libraries) if it could carve out an intelligent, entertaining and effective five minutes a week in a good time slot. When will something like "What in the World" return?

### Local and Internal Programs

A significant interest also exists for a less ambitious use of television among museums. For the last five years, the American Association of Museums has showcased examples of museum-produced videotapes at its annual meeting. But approximately 80 percent of the tapes submitted to the Museum Living Room have been amateurish or riddled with clichés. Most were examples of a museum's working on a onetime basis with a local station or independent producer. Many museums have produced material for in-house purposes of enhancing an exhibition. Among the more appealing pieces were programs produced by the Brooklyn Museum, the Amon Carter Museum, the Walker Art Center and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, at costs ranging from $1,000 to $25,000.

The most consistent and intriguing statistic that emerges from this annual survey of museums and television is

that more than 75 percent of those experimenting with television are *art* museums (when only 20 percent of all museums are art museums). While it would seem that science and natural history museums might have a more natural affinity for a technological medium, and while their subject matter lends itself more easily to television, it is, nevertheless, the art museums that remain the most excited and most involved. This predilection has been evident since the first surveys of museums and their use of television.[5]

*"Metropolitan Cats," produced for ABC Video Enterprises in association with the Metropolitan Museum of Art, succeeds because of the liveliness of the cats on camera.*

### Less Pomp, More Circumstances

On the rare occasions when producers have created successful programs with museums, they have sought to employ techniques for presenting art that did not rely on esthetic concerns as the primary focus for content. For the television medium, art works are better treated when the emphasis is on the *circumstances* surrounding an object. "Circumstances" might mean historical context, details of acquisition, ideas or comments from the artist, anecdotal material, public or professional response, critical opinion, issues of conservation or installation—anything but esthetic proclamations.

For example, the National Gallery's award-winning film of Picasso's "Saltimbanques" is enriched by its incorporation of Parisian street scenes and images from a real circus. The Smithsonian's "American Picture Palaces" is made entertaining by its clever and appropriate incorporation of clips from Hollywood classics to create a context. The Metropolitan's "La Belle Epoque" is successful not because of the art or costume that it shows but because of its skillful recreation of a historic period, its casting of Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., as a key on-camera person and its capturing of colorful personalities who were part of that era. Similarly, "Metropolitan Cats," in spite of some conceptual drawbacks, is enjoyable to watch not

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because of the art work but because of the liveliness of the cats pictured on camera.

The implication of these judgments is that it is a mistake to deal with esthetic issues head-on in television. Narrative treatments, taking the viewer through detectivelike trains of thought, game-show formats, newslike reporting, journeys to exotic locales or private places, are all natural to the media (as demonstrated in "Smithsonian World"); trying to convey the experience of a painting, sculpture or building is not. It is possible to create the context, to generate excitement, to suggest the passion that infects museum staffs, collectors and art historians, but it has to be done by effective use of the medium first, and incorporation of subject matter second.

Like most forms of communication, a medium works best when it is employed in a mode that is natural to it. Television, as experienced by the general public, is most successful when it shares secrets with us.

These sensitivities are basic to a series about 10 art museums in America being developed for WGBH for 1987. Originally entitled "Museum Profiles," the programs are rigorously conceived to avoid the common clichés and the pitfalls of worshiping art objects. They are intended to capitalize on all the inherent strengths of the television medium and to be compelling, entertaining and in harmony with the self-perception of each institution. The nature of each program is that it will focus on a single outstanding aspect of the museum's operation and examine it in as much detail as possible. Because art museums are the subject matter, and because of the dismal history of past efforts to put this kind of institution on the air, it may take years to raise the $1.5 million necessary to produce the series. One of the nobler ambitions of this project is to create, at least for public television, a regular slot for the visual arts that would match what has been achieved for music, dance and theater.

In the meantime, we can be thankful for at least one program, miraculously on commercial network television, that consistently provides an outstanding treatment of visual arts and cultural concerns in general. This is the frequent museum or exhibition story that appears on Charles Kuralt's "Sunday Morning" on CBS. It is not only the host who makes these segments work. It is the intelligence, the pacing, the good camera work and the absence of clichés, adulation of "precious" objects, pretentious classical music, pompous narrators and hackneyed or complex writing.

After completing his TV series "The Shock of the New," Robert Hughes observed,

> Intelligent television encourages plain speech, an exceedingly rare commodity in the art world. But then, we do not have much intelligent television in America. . . . TV likes stories. . . . To film a painting is not to reproduce it, but to comment on it. The editing is always part of the argument: it is not a means of passive reproduction.[6]

The challenge is to balance the needs of a "mass medium" with the desire to be "intelligent." The two terms appear to be in conflict with each other . . . yet one hopes that, at some future date, through an effective marriage of talent, brains, funding and willing institutions, a worthy product will hit the airwaves that will inform and delight both the connoisseur *and* the public. Δ



**Notes**

1. John J. O'Conner, "A Stylish Success and a High-Toned Failure," *New York Times*, May 15, 1983, p. 31.
2. Theodore L. Low, *The Museum as a Social Instrument* (Washington, D.C.: American Association of Museums, 1942).
3. For an insider's opinion of these same shows, see Russell Connor, "The 17-Inch Museum," *Museum News* 62, no. 2 (December 1983): 11-12.
4. See Kirsten Beck, "A New Connection: Museums and Cable," *Museum News* 61, no. 6 (August 1983): 54-55.
5. David Katzive, "Museums Enter the Video Generation," *Museum News* 51, no. 5 (January 1973): 20-24.
6. Robert Hughes, "The One and the Many: Art and Mass Reproduction," *Art News*, November 1982, p. 116.

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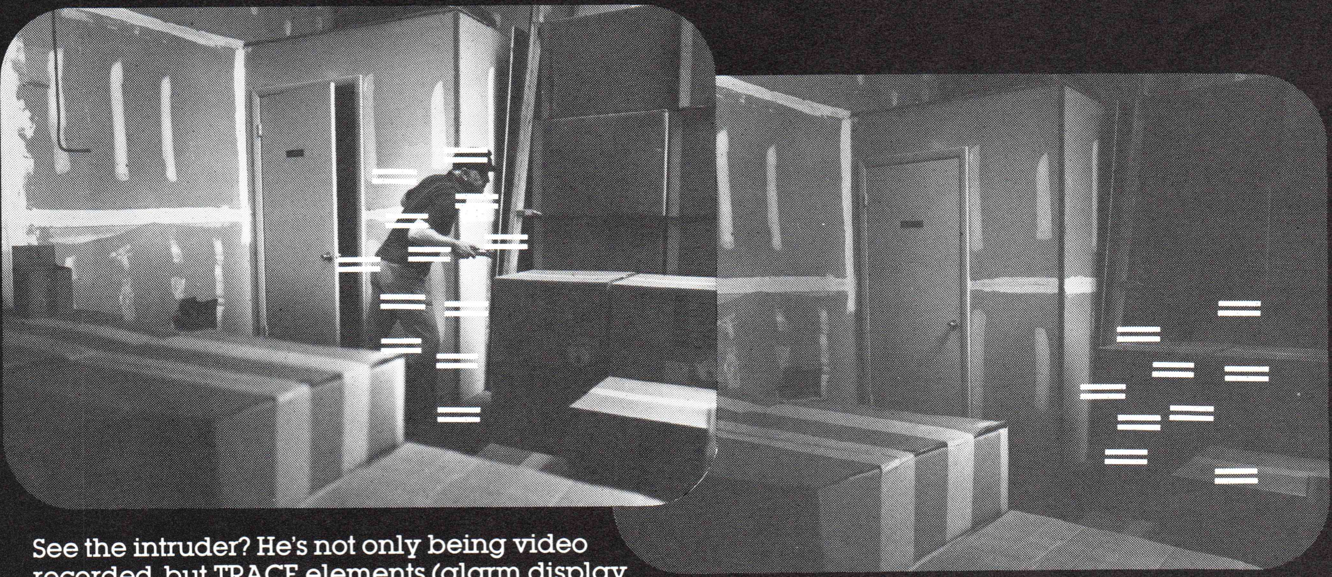

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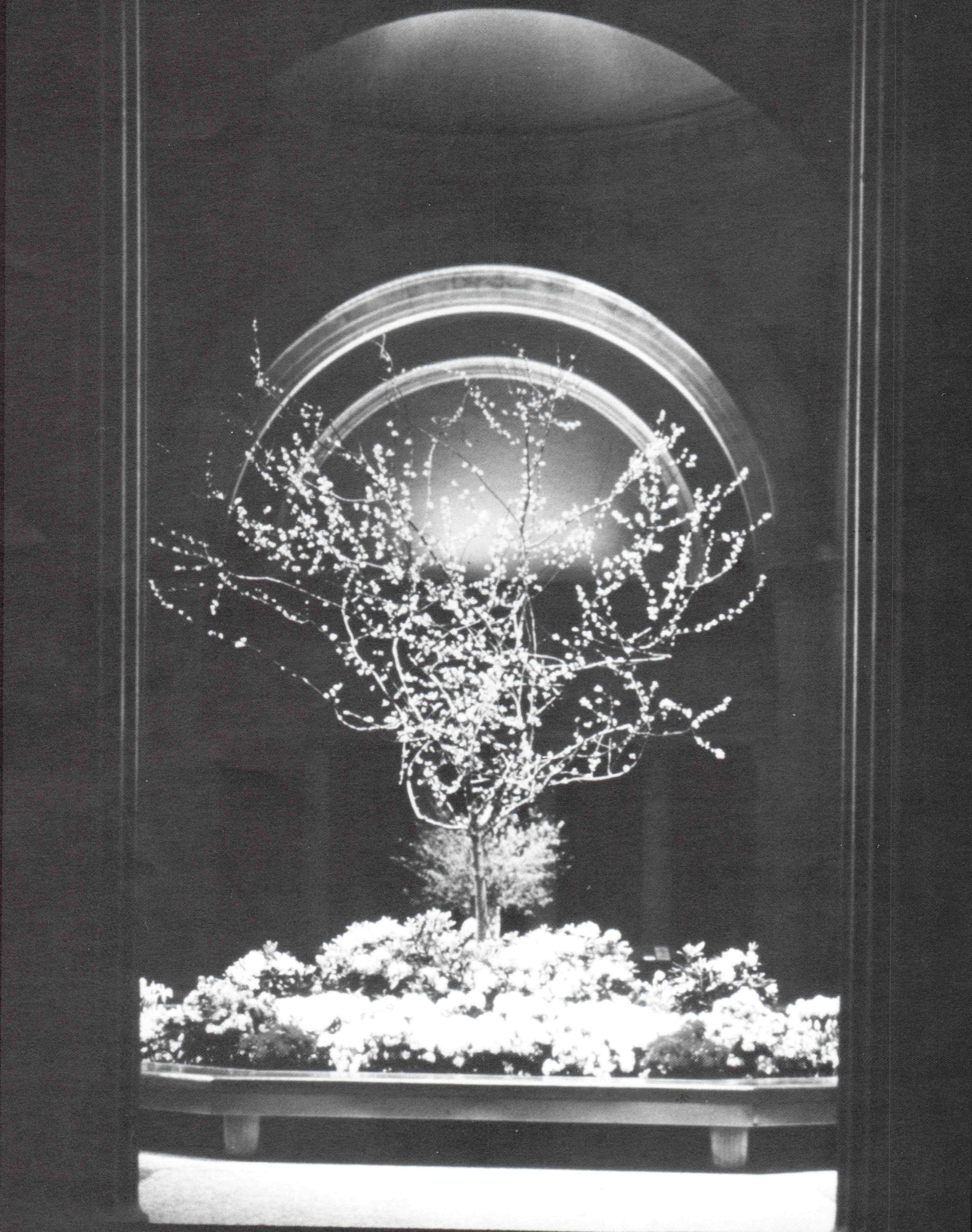

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# EDITOR'S NOTES

Volume 62, Number 5

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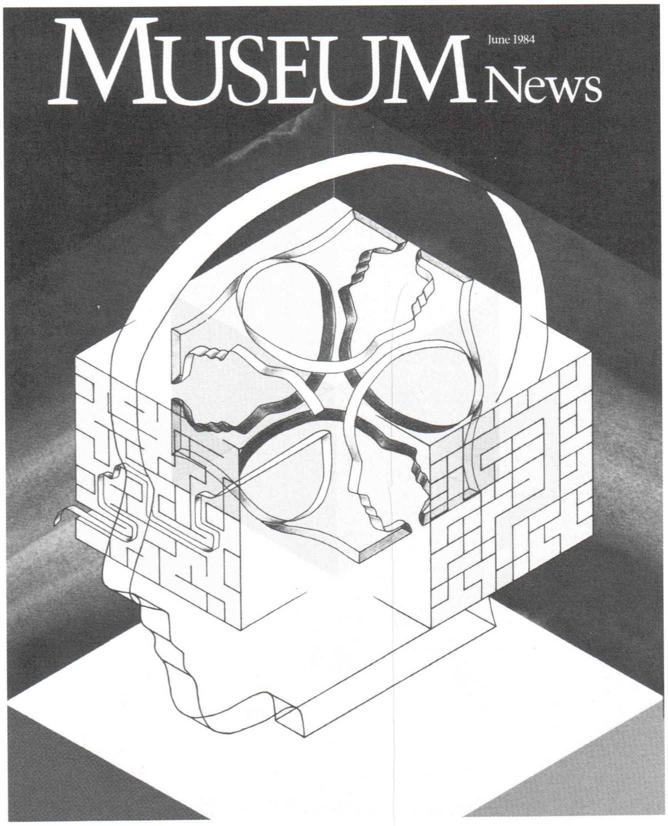
Former New Jersey Bell president Chester Barnard has a useful definition of leadership. "A leader's role," he says, "is to harness the social forces in an organization, to shape and guide values." What an apt statement this is for museums, since the country's best museums so often owe their excellence to good leadership. Forceful leaders can define a museum's mission and defend the intent behind it, all the while issuing challenges and asking questions that keep the museum alive and moving ahead. Effective leaders are the link between purpose and practice. They create an atmosphere that stimulates their staff to be creative and to excel, while guarding closely the integrity of the museum and the potential its mission offers.

Without a doubt, these are times that require sound, innovative leadership. Museums are inextricably connected to the rest of American life, and for that reason they are closely affected by a plethora of societal trends. The strain on museums' economic resources, the abundance of legal issues from conflict of interest to illicit traffic in art objects, the challenge of guiding museums into an era of collaboration with other institutions—all are testing the foresight and flexibility of museum leaders.

Leadership is an appropriate theme for this annual meeting issue, which comes off the press as AAM members gather in Washington, D.C., to consider the topic, "Museums in Service to America." How effective museums are in their service to society depends very strongly on how effective their leadership is. We asked Craig Black to write about some of the challenges museum leaders confront today, the leadership qualities those challenges demand and the important but often-ignored distinctions between leadership and management. Women do not heavily populate the upper echelons of museum leadership; in "Room at the Top," a panel of women administrators considers the situation. And finally, Israel Unterman and Richard Hart Davis' study of not-for-profit boards of trustees analyzes some of the common problems and suggests some positive steps. Alan Ullberg's afterword puts the study in an appropriate context for museum leaders.

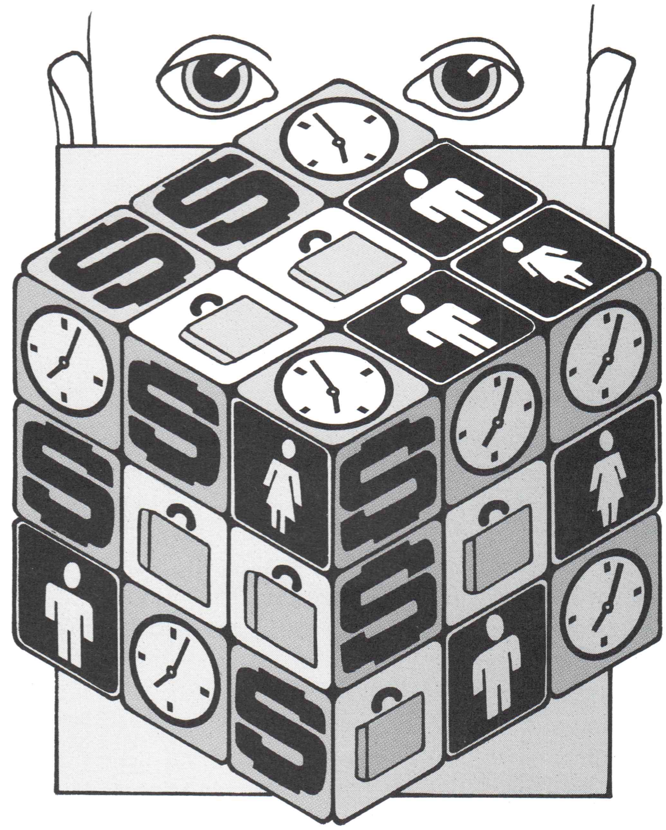
When it comes to leadership, the perennial arguments over whether a museum is or is not a business are beside the point. Like any enterprise established to carry out a mission, museums have special qualities that ultimately determine the style of leadership they need and shape the definitions of "professionalism," "excellence" and "success" in the museum setting.




Public relations executive William Ruder once described those special qualities. The function of a museum, he said, "is not to be like a corporation that worships at the altar of 15-percent compounded growth. Our business is to help people enrich their lives. We have to help people develop an understanding of what happened, what's happening and what might happen in the world around us. We have to make a contribution to an improved quality of life." These are the values the leaders of museums need to shape and guide.

Ellen Cochran Hicks

# The Nature of Leadership



CRAIG C. BLACK

Leadership, management, administration — these terms are certainly not synonymous, yet they are all invoked whenever museum boards face the search for a new director. In the halcyon days of old, when it came time to find a replacement for the director retiring after 20 years of faithful service, the board would seek out, as the owners of today's professional football teams might say, "the best available talent." Dillon Ripley succeeded Alexander Wetmore at the Smithsonian Institution, Sherman Lee succeeded William M. Milliken at the Cleveland Museum of Art, Herbert Friedmann succeeded Jean Delacour at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History. Whether in history, art history or science, the primary concern was for leadership in the scholarly pursuits of the museum.

Today, when trustees begin the search for a new museum director, they might talk more about management. Leadership and management are not the same thing. I believe the distinction lies in vision and inspiration. A manager must organize and plan, follow through on detail and keep the group together. Institutional goals will be achieved through consensus as the manager maintains a steady course guided by well-defined procedures and principles. Managers spring few surprises and break few eggs or little new ground. Leaders, on the other hand, have visions, take risks and cause others either to follow or turn completely away. Leaders have goals and develop strategies, but they generally delegate the operative details to others. Their forte is to see and to inspire.

Over the last decade we have seen a significant change in the notion of what a museum director should be and what role he should play in the program of the museum. Should the director provide management or leadership? Should he be the best possible scholar or a sound business manager? There is a growing belief that one individual can no longer be both. William Wordsworth's perception that "the world is too much with us; late and soon, getting and spending, we lay waste our powers" has indeed caught up with museums. The "getting and spending" require a special knowledge and training that is not normally a part of the scientist's or art historian's repertoire.

Today we find former college presidents trained in the law or former corporate leaders skilled in profit and loss becoming the chief executive officers of many of our major museums. In some instances responsibilities are shared more or less equally between the scholarly or artistic director and the chief business officer, while in others the overall direction rests with the individual trained in the world of business, balance sheets and net earnings.

Museums are not alone in redefining institutional management; similar changes have pervaded much of the not-for-profit sector. Performing arts organizations have both artistic directors and managing directors. Universities and colleges more frequently turn to presidents and chancellors with business-school or corporate-management backgrounds. Leadership in scholarly pursuits is then bumped down the line to a vice-president, vice-chancellor or provost. Is it paranoia, or is there perhaps a message here suggesting that museums, universities, opera companies and cultural institutions in general have not paid proper attention to the day-to-day management of their affairs?

Within the museum world much has occurred in the last 10-15 years to alter fundamentally the way in which our institutions operate. Almost unwittingly, museums have taken on certain commercial characteristics. While

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CRAIG C. BLACK is director of the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History. He is past president of the AAM and a member of the Commission on Museums for a New Century.

still espousing the artistic and scholarly traditions of nonprofit educational institutions, they have set up marketing operations, and the director and board speak more often of earned income and revenue centers. Gate receipts or, if one prefers, admission donations, are in large part an innovation of the last two decades. The development office has become as standard a feature of the museum hierarchy as the exhibit department or registrar. Another new aspect of museum funding is the government grant, receipt of which requires accounting and audit procedures unheard of in museums 20 years ago.

All of these income-earning functions have been either newly installed or markedly increased since the late 1950s and early 1960s. They have come in response to the greater number of museums competing for support, the greater number of programs clamored for by a wider and more demanding audience and ever-increasing costs in an inflationary economy. When one hears that in 1980 the total budgets of museums in America exceeded $1 billion, one has to acknowledge that Calvin Coolidge was right. Even in the nonprofit sector, even for cultural institutions, "The business of America is business."

In order to survive, museums have had to adopt marketing strategies and develop grantsmanship abilities. As museum directors, board members, and development staff have taken a much more visible role in raising the funds necessary to keep their institutions viable, they have put themselves more squarely in the public's eye. Members of the general public have learned more about the fiscal needs and problems of museums. They have learned of budget deficits. They have watched their museums close exhibition spaces, curtail education programs and repeatedly raise the level of suggested admission contributions. They have read about museums selling parts of their collections to meet operating expenses; they have seen those transactions clouded by possible conflicts of interest among staff, trustees and dealers. Naturally they have become more concerned about how their dollars and their gifts are treated in their museums. Yes, "their museums"; we must never forget that we are indeed public trusts, and should we be tempted to do so, there are attorneys general to remind us of our true public responsibilities.

The new public awareness of museums has led to probing questions concerning operations and management that have placed new burdens on museum directors. All this may suggest that for the decades ahead we will need more museum directors who are keenly aware of the need to make their museums fiscally responsible and accountable to the public for the public support and attention they are now receiving. There is no doubt that we will require the highest quality of museum management to achieve this in the future. I contend that the real question, however, is where and at what level that management should lie, whether the scholar leader or the business manager will be the director.

Financial problems may seem overwhelming, but museums will face many other challenges in the years ahead. Greater public awareness and use of museums, together with the ever-increasing need for public support, demand a greater stake for the public in museum policy. We must open both our staffs and our boards to provide representation for the diversity of the communities we serve. We must be sensitive to the oft-heard complaint of elitism in our hallowed halls and strive for an excellence that is not exclusivist. To achieve excellence we must not only accept but encourage public participation in our planning for the future.

Perhaps the overriding concerns facing museums in the decade ahead are the maintenance, care and growth of their collections. There are hundreds of millions of objects in museums in this country today; frankly, we have no real idea just how *many* hundreds of millions. Catalogs and inventories of historical and anthropological collections and those in the natural sciences are woefully inadequate. While catalogs of art works are somewhat better, they are certainly not up to the standard we might expect, especially for decorative, "primitive" and pre-Columbian art collections.

A related concern is conservation. There is no gainsaying that the large majority of the objects in museum collections suffer from some degree of deterioration. Not only are our collections poorly cataloged and stored in inadequate and overcrowded areas, but they receive little or no regular condition review. Preservation of our natural and cultural heritage does not end with acquisition by a museum. All things deteriorate, from the human body to a moon rock; it just takes a little longer for one than the other. In order to ensure the preservation of our collections for study, for interpretation, for sheer enjoyment in the next century, we must insist that active conservation, both stabilization and treatment, be carried out.

**Should the director provide management or leadership? Should he be the best possible scholar or a sound business manager?**

We face massive record-keeping and conservation projects for those objects we already hold in public trust. At the same time we ponder the almost overwhelming challenge of collecting today for the future. As I wrote in the September 1978 issue of *Carnegie Magazine*, "The sheer size of these collections imposes enormous financial burdens on the housing institutions in terms of space, storage facilities, personnel and daily maintenance. Should we [can we], as stewards of these collections, accept a 1 to 2 percent [per year] growth rate for these collections?" I was writing about collections in natural science museums, but the situation and the question posed apply equally well to

those in many other kinds of museums. Now we must also face the problem of collecting contemporary cultural and historical material from the millions and millions of objects in use every day, from rockets to razors, from bathyspheres to bathtubs, from the unique to the commonplace. What contemporary art should we collect for the future?

Few institutions have well-articulated and well-understood policies on these questions. In this country there has never been the kind of national discussion as to who should collect what objects for the future that has taken place in Scandinavian countries. Is it reasonable in the coming decade for each museum to forge ahead collecting here and there, an island unto itself, or should we attempt to develop some national strategies to ensure that in 2000 A.D. our museums will have collections fairly representing our world and its cultures in the last two decades of this century? If we do not take these matters under discussion now, museums of the 21st century may convey the same distorted picture of the 20th century that our present collections have given us of the 18th.

The future holds enormous opportunity for museums to become the educational institutions they have so long claimed to be. Too often in the past, however, education in museums has consisted of the school tour, the brief and superficial introduction to the great hoard of knowledge that museum collections represent. Recently some museums have reexamined their curricula, as have most colleges and universities, and have shifted their emphasis from touring to discovery. Using the museum's unique collection resources, some classes now explore topics in depth. Museums have also begun to work closely with educators and school boards to present museum programs that build upon and expand the school curriculum.

This is but a part, however, of the overall educational role that museums should play in our developing post-industrial society. Museums can be of major service in the arena of alternative education and programming for adult audiences—for those who, with more leisure time, wish to discover new worlds and to be reminded of the best of their heritage through direct contact with museum collections.

There is another educational arena in which museums must begin to play a central role, and that is in assuring that college students in the years ahead have the opportunity to learn of the richness and diversity of past cultures and the natural world. A trend away from the teaching of material culture and the natural sciences, begun in the late 1970s, now appears to be accelerating. Fewer and fewer history, biology and anthropology departments are offering courses that deal with the three-dimensional objects of both past and present societies or with the organisms that share our planet. Many museums have moved to fill this void by offering courses, taught by curatorial staff, that are becoming integral to local college and university course curricula. Much more needs to be done, however, and on a broader, national scale, if we are to ensure that coming generations of college students are not culturally as well as scientifically illiterate.

Robert Nesbit recently observed in *The Third Century,* "We live . . . in a society that has become profoundly lowered . . . in its intellectual and cultural values." He attributes this decline to a decline in society's quest for and belief in excellence. Colleges and universities are, for him, the principal institutions that can mitigate the "barbarizing tendencies of our age" and reassert the values of our Western civilization. I believe museums are potentially as important in this regard. As Nesbit sees universities bringing students into direct contact with the finest ideas and perspectives of Western culture, so I see museums bringing all people into contact with the best of our civilization as well as with our natural and physical world.

Museums must lead in both acquainting and reminding people of our greatest qualities and achievements. To seize this opportunity, museums must have leaders thoroughly imbued with the ethos of museums and with the knowledge about their collections that will enable them to pursue and support true education. These leaders will not be mere managers.

Hugues de Varine-Bohan, past director general of the International Council of Museums, said in an article written for the 1975 edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica,*

> The museum, which alone can speak the language of real things, will more and more become an antidote to the culture of the image and the word. If it did not exist, it would be necessary to invent it. In scientific matters, it is the centre of a three-dimensional documentation of the history of the world and of man, which no publication can replace. As an instrument of education and culture, provided that it adopts an integrated vision of science and humanism and provided also that it decentralizes itself physically and intellectually, the museum is a centre of development for all men through their participation in the creation and continuity of culture. Socially the museum does not accept distinctions of class nor those of race or age. It invites an opening of the spirit, an enduring insight into the problems of yesterday, today, and tomorrow. It is, finally and above all else, an essential element of the cultural environment of man, present and future.

I believe unequivocally that, to meet de Varine-Bohan's vision and the challenge of the future, museums must have leaders — leaders who have the sense to know that they must rely on business managers, on thoughtful boards of trustees, on all the creative staff of the institution to achieve the museum's goals, but who have the vision, the ability to articulate that vision and the passion to inspire others to attain it. Without such leaders, museums will be run to achieve the "bottom line" without understanding—and, alas, often without caring for—their true mission. The museum director for the next decades must, as Homer said of heroes in the *Iliad,* "be both a speaker of words and a doer of deeds." Δ

# Room at the Top

*Edited by Kendall Taylor*

***Do women really have a crack at the top jobs in the museum profession? As candidates for directorships, are they taken seriously by boards of trustees? Are women held back, or do they hold themselves back? Once in the top positions, do they face special problems?***

***These questions were considered by a panel of women museum directors and administrators at the Northeast Museums Conference meeting in October 1983 at Cape May, New Jersey. The panelists included KEVAN N. MOSS, executive director of the Gallery Association of New York State in Hamilton, New York; LINDA SWEET, executive vice-president of Management Consultants for the Arts in New York City; VIKI SAND, director of the Shaker Museum in Old Chatham, New York; and NANCY D. KOLB, assistant executive director of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission in Harrisburg. KENDALL TAYLOR, former head of traveling exhibitions at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., chaired the panel, which was taped; she prepared the transcription and edited it for publication.***

***—Ed.***

## Kevan N. Moss

There are four areas that any director, male or female, needs to think about: decision making, technical development, teamwork and risk taking. I am going to discuss briefly what seem to be typical patterns of behavior in women in each of these areas. My purpose is to suggest ways we women need to prepare ourselves for assuming top positions of leadership in our institutions.

In the first area, decision making, it seems to me that any true leader must be willing to make a decision, stand behind it and take all the criticism that may result from it. As I watch the younger women on my staff, they appear to be indecisive; and, as I reflect on this in terms of my own experience, I think it's an inhibition that originates in a need to be approved or seen as always right. I've talked with male counterparts, and they don't seem as fearful of adverse judgments. We women have to realize something that is basically common sense: any decision opens up its maker to judgment, and often to criticism. The most important thing is that a staff knows that its director will make a decision and that she will not waste time or shrink

from it by agonizing over what the response to it will be. We have to be decisive, and that means being willing to be seen as wrong.

Second, I have a firm conviction that we have to develop real expertise and technical skills — and use them. My emphasis on this point probably stems from experiences I had while working for four years at an architectural firm. I was fortunate to work for one of the first registered women architects in Pennsylvania. She took me aside within the first week or two and said, "Look, if you're going to get ahead in this world, you've got to be tough. Don't let anybody push you around." I later found out what she meant. I accompanied her on an inspection tour of a job site, often a

confrontational situation between architect and contractor. These situations are difficult for anybody on an architectural team, but they are especially difficult for women. A brick wall was laid up at temperatures too low for proper bonding and against our specifications. She demanded that it be redone. It soon became evident that our technical arguments were not taken seriously by the construction crew. The crew knew we were right but refused to believe that two women were going to force them to redo the wall. To my astonishment, and theirs, she said, "Come with me, Kevan; we're going to put our shoulders against this brick wall and push it over." We did just that. The wall came down, and the crew rebuilt it the way we wanted. I saw the importance of having the expertise to control a situation and the confidence to use it. I understood the importance of being demanding and not allowing any difficulties to compromise what you know needs to be done.

Moreover, being exacting in your field builds a reputation that will be helpful to you.

Third, I want to stress teamwork. I think women have an advantage over men in this area. We are taught to encourage, and we are good at helping staff members along. These are very positive qualities, I believe, although I have found that they can be viewed as a problem when other staff members, used to more traditional managerial styles, wonder why you're taking so much time and care with an individual staff member. I think that's a short-range point of view. This is an area in which women should not just adopt the successful methods of male counterparts; they should improve on and change them. I would like to think that as we become more "people-oriented" in all kinds of professions, we will take a long-range "people" point of view, and we will understand how such a view becomes a very positive attribute for any director.

Finally, I think all of the issues I have been talking about come down to a matter of being willing to take risks. Getting to the top *requires* a willingness to take risks, psychologically as well as professionally. Women directors for whom the road to the top has been difficult are in a position to realize how important it is to maintain the kind of climate in which others can take risks. We all know the stereotypical woman professional who has made it to the top and consequently sees only one way to get there. We who successfully challenge the barriers to our advancement ought to be especially conscious of the waste that is produced by that attitude. Maintaining an atmosphere in which people are willing to take risks will encourage more creative solutions than any of us could possibly come up with on our own.

In conclusion, I would like to say that I am brought to make these remarks because I am troubled by the mid-career women professionals I know. They seem to have lowered their aspirations. What keeps these professionals from ultimately achieving top management positions now that they are so close? Are the last barriers to our success subtly internalized ones; that is, not the attitudes of others, but our own?

It is the nature of what we are doing that there are no reassuring models for the last big step. I want to encourage us all not to be dismayed by that. We must treat those last

**Maintaining an atmosphere in which people are willing to take risks will encourage more creative solutions than any of us could possibly come up with on our own.**

barriers — the fear of making decisions, of demanding technical competence, of embracing new methods and of encouraging others to follow us — as we treated the other ones. We will have to put our shoulders against them and push them over.

## Linda Sweet

I want to begin by introducing you to what I do. I work with museums all over the country, helping them to find top-level personnel, most often directors. I am therefore in a position to have an overview of the field and the place of women in the profession. Because I deal with finding people for positions, I'm going to address myself to the first question first: Do women really have a crack at the top jobs in the museum profession? Well, the answer is yes, and the answer is no; it depends on how you define "top." Yes, women can and do achieve the position of director. There were, for example, more than 30 women museum directors at the business meeting of the Women Museum Directors and Administrators Caucus at this conference. But no, they are not, on the whole, directors of the top museums, if we define "top" as meaning big and prestigious. The answer to the next question, then—Are women as candidates taken seriously by boards of trustees?—also has to be answered with a yes and a no. It's a qualified yes because I think the question raises several issues.

The first issue has to do with the type of museum of which many women are directors. The smaller the institution, and the lower paying the job, the more likely it is that a woman will be hired as director. In addition, the more problematic the history of that institution, the more likely that a woman will be considered for that position. If we look at individuals on this panel, and at the institutions they head, or if we look at other women directors, we see that these generalizations are substantiated. Viki Sand, for example, is director of a wonderful museum, but it is a very, very small museum. In other instances, women have become directors of organizations that have had turbulent histories. Often there have been several directors in rapid succession. Women are considered for these positions because, frankly, it was difficult to attract anyone else or as wide a pool of qualified applicants as desired. This is not uncommon.

The second issue that the question raises has to do with getting to the interview stage. My experience has been that once interviewed, women can compete very ably, but being granted an interview can be a problem. Several boards of trustees that I have worked with, in this region as well as in other parts of the country, have said to me, "We do not want a woman." What is telling, as I think over all of this, is that when I started my career in an art gallery in the 1960s I was told by the director that if any women artists asked to leave their work or their slides, so that they could be viewed for possible showing, I was to tell them that there was no more room in this gallery's stable, whereas I was to accept the work or slides of men artists. Women, the director claimed, were more emotional than men, and it was impossible to have a business relationship with them. At the time I thought he was probably right—what did I know? I was 20 years old, and I really did think that it was better to go to a male doctor than a female doctor, and so, probably, male artists were better than female artists and less difficult to deal with. Fortunately, I've grown up, and the times along with me. In at least two of the cases in which trustees have said to me that they don't want a woman director, and they don't even want to look at a woman candidate, indeed, they have hired a woman.

Although I do care greatly about the issue, I cannot make it my personal mission to place women in jobs. I have to be entirely objective in my work. I will show a board the résumés of qualified individuals, regardless of their sex or race or anything else. Once a board looks at résumés and receives additional information about potential candidates, it is often more willing to consider a woman.

But I think the difficulty is how to get to that interview stage if you're approaching a board on your own. Perhaps the most important effort to make is to get someone to act as your intermediary and present you to the search committee. I know the Women Museum Directors and Administrators Caucus has talked about the sharing of job information among women. Sharing job information is not enough; it's only a first step. We also have to develop that network and be willing to work even harder for one of its members, possibly even calling up a trustee and making a personal pitch for a particular individual.

In a search I worked on recently the trustees had said to me they did not want a woman, they certainly did not want a single woman and they really wanted a couple with the man as the director and his wife as the hostess. In fact, I was able to present the board with a very strong female candidate for the job, and this woman, through her own network, was able to have someone else present her to the board, too. She did, indeed, get the job, and the trustees are

absolutely delighted with her. So, I think it is very important to know that if you are presenting yourself only through a résumé and a cover letter, you may be ignored.

The other way that women do get jobs in museums is by being there—on the spot. They are very often put into the acting director position and then can step into the director's position. That was true for Kevan Moss at the Gallery Association of New York State.

This brings me to the next question: Are women held back, or do they hold themselves back? Well, the answer is yes and yes. Without a doubt, women are being held back, and often in ways they are not even aware of. I recently worked on a search committee with two men in their 30s who considered themselves to be enlightened and supportive of women. Both have career-oriented wives, one with an M.B.A. and a successful career in the insurance industry, the other with two children and now going for her M.B.A. Well, we interviewed a young woman who happened to be very quiet but well spoken, I thought. She made a good impression, but she mentioned that she was going to be married in a month or two. When the interview ended I escorted her out of the room and came back to find that these two enlightened men were saying, "Well, she doesn't seem to be career oriented; she will get married and probably have a child—get pregnant a month or two after the wedding." I was absolutely beside myself. Fortunately, these were two people whom I knew well; I could make a scene, and I did! And they were shocked. They just didn't realize what they had done or what the implications of what they were saying were. In the end they were actually grateful to me for pointing out their prejudices, but this does not always happen. Had I not been there, that woman would simply have been dismissed. There was nothing objective about the decision they were making for her.

So, as you can see, women are definitely held back. They can't live down the stereotypical images that men have of them, but they can be prepared to deal with those stereotypes. They can anticipate them and work with them. And I think that women have to engage in long-term and rigorous career planning. This is something they have not been trained to do, nor is it expected that they will. Even career-oriented women, myself included, tend to look only at what is immediate. You have to look at your present job in terms of the larger picture; you have to aim to be the chief executive officer, the director. This doesn't preclude your finding that you like what you're doing enough not to have to, or want to, move beyond it, but long-range career planning at least provides you with the opportunity to move ahead if that is what you want to do. You have to have an overview of the entire field. You have to examine the levels of the hierarchy. You have to calculate, coldly, the steps you need to go through to reach the top. You have to know how your director got there, and you have to know how other directors achieved their positions. You have to establish a time frame so you know when it is appropriate for you to make your next move. And you have to know that for women, the shortest path to the top is certainly not straight up. You're going to have to make lateral moves, and you're going to have to zigzag. And in general, women who are ambitious for themselves tend to be fairly independent, somewhat rebellious and assertive, and these are characteristics that are difficult for them when it comes to learning the rules of the game—and playing the game. But I think that once women do learn the rules, these qualities can work to their advantage because they can tenaciously, and with persistence and clear-sightedness, work to accomplish what they want to accomplish. I still do think that for those women who are close to the top, who are already directing middle-sized museums with some prestige, the path to the very top is going to be extremely difficult. But I'm optimistic.

## Viki Sand

Independent, rebellious, assertive — what wonderful adjectives!

Clearly, it's true: you can't do something unless you see yourself as able to do it. That has been said this morning in a variety of ways. There are three common instances when women are not successful in projecting themselves as leaders. First, in meetings, in groups, women tend to be more critical of themselves than they need to be. Referring back to what Kevan has said about decision making, remember, it only takes 51 percent to be a success. Second, women tend to acknowledge what they don't know more readily than they need to. People primarily want to know

whether you know how to find out what you need to know. Third, women tend to confuse the need for emotional support with the need to have a staff respect their judgment.

We all do hold ourselves back to some extent, but that implies that there is no such thing as institutional sexism and institutional racism. In the 1960s and 1970s a lot of us learned that we couldn't change the world in the dramatic way we wanted and subsequently directed our energies toward changing ourselves. Now there are self-help books for everything: "If you just do these 15 things, you're going to be successful"; conversely, if you don't do them, or if you're not "there," it's clearly your own fault. It doesn't take a radical feminist to point out that there are no women heads of major corporations. It doesn't take a radical feminist to look at the educational establishment and point out that of the thousands of school districts in the country only a handful are headed by women superintendents. It doesn't take a radical feminist to point out that only a very few women have ever headed major museums in this country and that there has never been a woman president of the American Association of Museums. The truth is that women are the subjects of systematic discrimination, as are people of color. It's not fashionable to talk about this in the 1980s, but it happens to be true. We cannot be naive as we discuss whether there is room at the top.

When we talk about women in the top management positions, we need to make it clear that women do not need to be directors to have successful careers, nor do men. It's important to question society's definition of "success." Wouldn't it be marvelous if we could all feel comfortable and fulfilled by doing good jobs as librarians, educators or curators, as well as directors?

Finally, I want to conclude by saying something about the responsibilities of women who have administrative positions or directorships. First, we must acknowledge our debt to the feminist movement and to individuals who have led the way. There is nothing so lacking in historical accuracy as the woman who says, "I got here on my own, so can others." Feminist women and men have fought for decades, and they need to be recognized. Second, we have a responsibility to eradicate sexism and racism in the historical interpretations of our public programs, exhibitions and publications, along with the research systems that support them. Third, we need to make sure that our hiring and compensation practices reflect "equal pay for equal work." We also need to work to create balance in the governing structure of our museums.

If it's just a matter of getting into the game and playing it, then we don't need each other. If it is a matter of trying to make it possible both for our institutions to achieve their fullest measure of success and for our staff members to respond to their fullest capacities, then we need to try, all of us, to create an environment that provides an opportunity for individual self-determination.

## Nancy D. Kolb

Why are there not more women in senior management positions within the museum profession? The answer to this question is not easy. All the obvious problems that women face in the workplace are not necessarily related to the particular challenges of the museum profession and the changing nature of the museum business. My explanation as to why there are few women administrators in senior positions is threefold. First, many women seem reluctant to accept management positions. This is not to say that women cannot do the job, but rather that they choose not to move into administrative positions. Second, in many institutions (not just museums) community leaders who are women have only recently been incorporated into the power structure; they have only recently been named to the boards of nonprofit organizations. Finally, the mobility of women with families is often restricted by personal rather than professional constraints.

It may be that the first point is the major factor in assessing the dearth of women executives in a profession that has many women practitioners. A thought to consider: we, as women professionals, are not so much being held back by others as we are holding ourselves back. For whatever reason, we would rather remain frontline museologists specializing in a discipline than accept the new and difficult challenges inherent in a directorship. This preference is not entirely female, as many of our male colleagues appear to be making the same kind of career choice. A critical factor right now is that many of us never anticipated that administration would become a part of our career path, and we feel uncomfortable in accepting challenges for which our training programs have not prepared us.

Until such time as more women are willing to face the challenge of management and adopt what can be called a "go-for-it" philosophy in planning their careers, the current situation will not change much. For both men and women there are ample educational opportunities within and

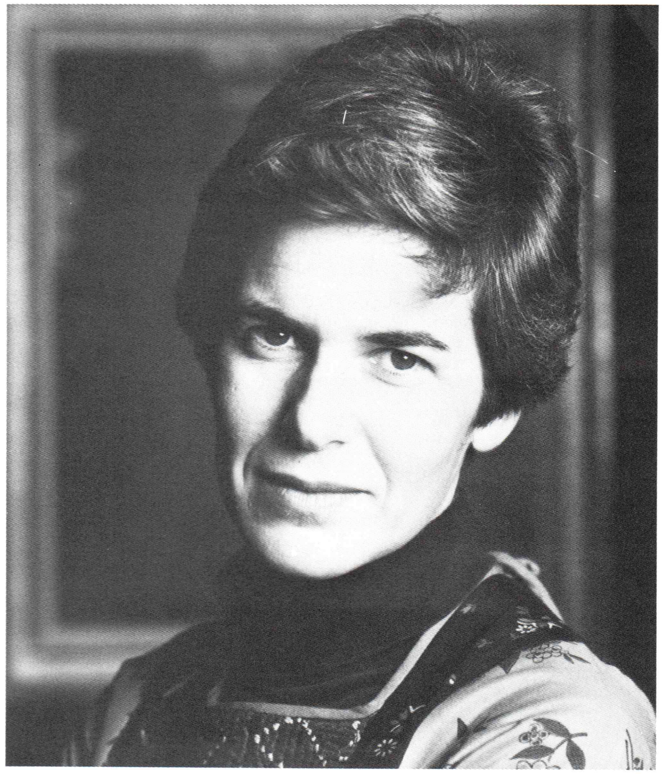
without the field to acquire the requisite management skills and training, although the best way to learn may be by doing. Regardless, the time has come for us to "go for it!!"

The lack of women trustees or directors in the power structure of many nonprofit organizations, and therefore in a position to influence the search committees of cultural institutions, may be a problem that is beginning to resolve itself. Those of you who are in positions to influence such matters should seek out successful women in your communities and make their availability known to the nominating committee of your board. Then it is up to these trustees to make their presence and influence felt. Personally, I have been lucky to work with several organizations that were led or profoundly influenced by very competent women. I have watched other nonprofit organizations begin to realize that a sexually balanced board is beneficial to their public image and community influence.

The third factor is career mobility. Any family has difficult choices to make when one partner is offered a job, or wants to seek a position, in a different geographic region. More often than not a family with children will, whether the woman is the principal breadwinner or not, think long and hard about relocating for "mom's career." Again, life styles in America seem to be changing, and more and more families—like mine—are making sacrifices to further a wife and mother's career. Realistically, however, this is a factor that affects women far more than men.

In general, women in the museum profession must come to believe more in themselves as managers. If you are good, you will be recognized as being professionally competent regardless of your sex. If you are not a good manager, that probably has nothing to do with the fact that you are a woman. The reality of the situation today is that we, as women professionals, are often judged on two levels: on how we function as day-to-day managers and on the fact that we are women. If we succeed, it is because we are good managers; if we fail, it is because we are women. Even this kind of double standard in evaluation seems to be fading, but not fast enough to erase its negative impact.

In conclusion, I submit that much of what appears to be special challenges facing women museum professionals is in reality a dynamic in the whole museum profession in the 1980s. We are all familiar with budgetary restrictions, the need for more earned income, the intense competition for federal and private funds, staff shortages, personnel management problems and, generally, the changing needs and focuses of our institutions. Those of us who have committed our careers to this profession, whether male or female, must be able to respond to these challenges, retrain ourselves if necessary and get on with the business of museums! Many of the on-the-job problems that women feel are exclusively theirs are in reality reflections of the changing nature of our profession. When the profession is itself in a state of flux, this may not be the appropriate time to divide museologists into male-female confrontations.



## Kendall Taylor

Leadership is this decade's "buzzword" for women, yet many women are not familiar enough with what it takes to be an effective leader. They do not understand that leaders are not born, but made. Men often comprehend this early on and begin developing their leadership skills while in school. Women, though they may be getting a late start, need to do the same thing. Some of these leadership skills can be acquired by formal management training. That doesn't mean you have to go back to get M.B.A. degrees, but it does mean you need to take workshops or a course or two on staff development, personnel policies and procedures, accounting, computer technology—whatever it is you feel you are weak in. It may mean picking up a semester's course in the evening at a local college. The point is you are not going to be able to go into the top job and simply acquire these skills by assimilation. Men, as well, often do not have these skills when they reach the top, but their weaknesses are frequently overlooked; with women they are immediately pinpointed.

Another difficulty women often face when they enter management positions is that they have no idea about how to captain a team. Many have never played on a team, have never been captain of the group. And when you are in the top position, you *are* the captain. The staff and trustees look to you to make the right decision, and when you make a mistake, the first thing they say to themselves is "Ah-ha, she doesn't know what she's doing; she doesn't belong up there; she doesn't have what it takes to lead." But this can be easily remedied, and best remedied now, on the way up, rather than when you are actually in the top position. Start

reading about management styles, attend management workshops and involve yourself in some type of team activity or sport. Play leader in your personal life, and extend those skills to your professional life.

Most women are also not part of an "old-boy network"—that inner circle of individuals who talk professionally among themselves and who know what's really going on in the field. It is this "old-boy network" that provides inside information on where the good jobs will be turning up, which trustees to ask for good advice and so forth. And it's this network that really makes many of the decisions that affect our careers. It has an influence on which leaders are chosen and what those leaders can accomplish. Right now, this is still a predominantly male network. But that is changing. In the interim, what we can do for ourselves, however, is form our own networks: groups of individuals we respect, people in the profession we simply like—male or female, it makes no difference. Make contact with these people, and establish relationships with them. They stand to gain as much from us as we do from them.

The average woman museum professional lacks political savvy. She does not realize just how many decisions require it. And the only way to gain political savvy is from those who have it; you can't learn it from a book. You can learn it through experience, but then there's always the chance that you won't survive your own mistakes. I definitely think it's too late to learn political savvy once you're on top. You need to find individuals in the field who excel in shrewd thinking and have a political grasp of museum affairs and establish a mentor relationship with them. Do this as early as you can, and learn whatever they are willing to teach you.

Women in the top positions often have to "prove themselves" to male staff members and "placate" the female staff members who are jealous and may, in some cases, prefer working for a man. In these situations the first thing a woman director must do is disassemble the construct. Constructs are the frameworks in which people operate with one another, and they are often made up of limiting beliefs. First off, the director identifies the belief and then addresses it. That limiting belief, here, may be, "I prefer working for a man," or "No woman is ever going to do this job as effectively as a man" or it can be any other limiting idea. What you, as director, have to do is quickly figure out what belief is operating and break it down, or you will spend a lot of time going around in circles.

While I am certainly not speaking about all women, I am referring to a large number of them when I say that women lack financial and business expertise as well as long-range planning skills. Too many female executives I have known will ask someone else to come in to balance the books or to develop a long-range plan. And unless the woman director comes to the position with an M.B.A. or law degree in hand, she may be viewed as "soft" in the financial and business areas. In fact, women frequently do lack these skills. Men may lack the same skills and transfer fiscal duties in toto to an administrator, but if a woman does that, her weakness will be pinpointed. Critics will say, "Look, she can't even balance the monthly reports." A man can transfer that chore, but a woman cannot. She has to know that the tasks are being done right, and if they are not, that she can complete them herself. That means that now, ahead of time, women who seek directorship positions need to learn financial, business and planning skills.

I also want to say something about balancing one's personal and professional life and about being ready to seek the top position in any field. Ever since women, in droves, began entering the managerial strata of the work force, they have felt that they had to be "superwomen": keep the family running smoothly, the house perfect, the husband happy, and always be absolutely first-rate on the job. Gradually women are coming to the realization that it is simply not possible to do all things simultaneously. Priorities have to be set: what's most important at a given time, what must come second, what fourth. Women who must make such choices are turning to women in similar situations for advice and support. Support groups among women managers are a great help. If you don't know of such a group, start one.

Finally, the aspect of today's topic that, I must say, interests me the most: whether women are held back or hold themselves back. My position is that we are our own worst enemies, that we all too frequently hold ourselves back. Too many of us come with our own limiting belief—"I'm not ready." Now, that notion of "I'm not ready" comes up in different ways for each of us. For me it always came up as, "I'm not ready for the top job yet, not right now." Somebody would come to me and say, "Would you like to be considered for this top position," and I would say, "You know, I'm not quite ready. I'm ready for the position just under that position, but I don't think I'm quite ready for the top job." What I realized this past year was that I was *always* ready, I was always as ready as anyone else was ready, that nobody is ever ready and everybody is always ready. And more important, that if I'm not ready now, I might as well kick it in, for then I am never going to be ready. And if you're not ready at age 20, or 25 or 30, you are never going to feel ready either, because that feeling is not going to disappear when you are 32, or when you get married or when you finish your Ph.D. or M.B.A. It is a limiting belief that will continue with you unless you face it head on now and ask yourself what it means. We all know—we've heard it often enough—that as we view ourselves, so others view us. And if we, even secretly, harbor the belief that we're not ready, others will know it. Even though you may come on strong and have all the right credentials—a great curriculum vita, good publications, lots of great experience—others will pick up on this secret little film you are projecting that says, "I know I look as if I'm ready, but, you know what, I don't think I'm ready yet."

Well, drop it. You are ready, as ready as you will ever be. So go out there and be all you are. ∆

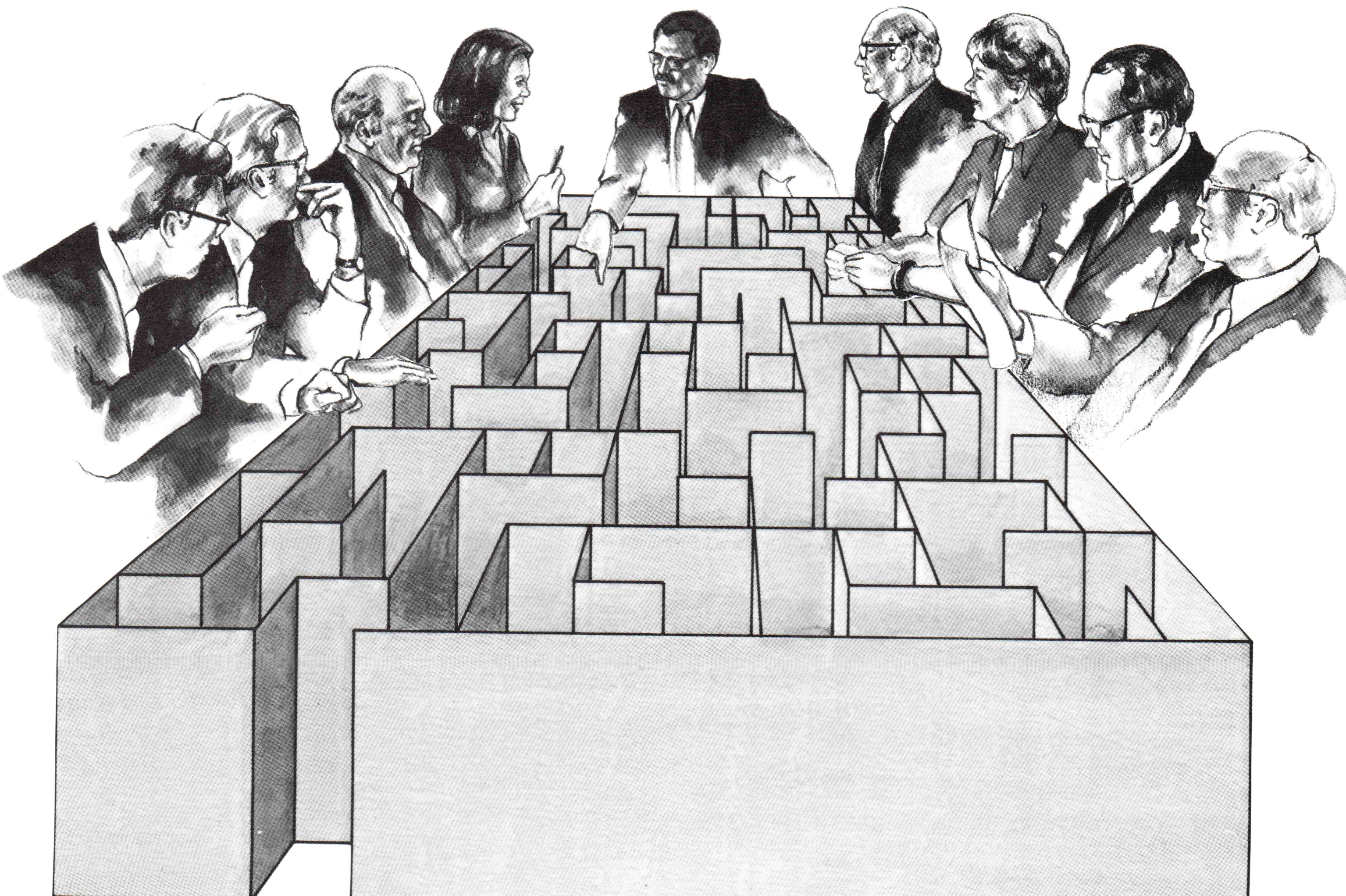
# The Strategy Gap in Not-for-Profits

*Israel Unterman*
*and*
*Richard Hart Davis*

***Business executives who become trustees too often fail to apply their managerial expertise to their volunteer efforts in not-for-profit organizations—a void that is most apparent in the formulation and implementation of strategy. This is one of the major findings from the authors' study of 103 not-for-profit organizations.***

***"The Strategy Gap in Not-for-Profits" was first published in the May-June 1982 issue of the* Harvard Business Review. *To bring its insights and suggestions to the attention of museum leadership, we are reprinting it here, together with an afterword prepared by Alan Ullberg, the author of the AAM's* Museum Trusteeship.**

***—Ed.***



In recent years the structure, accountability and governance of not-for-profit (NFP) organizations have come under close scrutiny, with a goal of improving delivery and cutting the cost of services. Observers are particularly critical of the lack of policy planning.

Not only have NFP organizations failed to reach the strategic management stage of development, but many of them have failed to reach even the strategic planning stages that for-profit enterprises initiated 15 to 20 years ago. In fact, NFP planning efforts are consistently frustrated by factors such as "lack of credibility, being actionless, constraints of tradition, overly ambitious timetables and frequent failure in setting priorities." [1]

To evaluate the process of strategic management in not-for-profit organizations, we studied more than 100 NFPs. Our exploration gives rise to one question in particular: Why is the tool of strategic management so infrequently used, especially by small and medium-sized NFPs? Moreover, how do boards of trustees behave when making strategic decisions? And how does their behavior compare with that of directors of for-profit enterprises?

Some of the answers to these questions are especially perplexing because people on boards of trustees often sit on boards of directors as well. Yet the evidence from our study indicates that, in the context of decision making, the behavior of the two boards differs greatly. In this article we will attempt to explain these differences.

## Elements of Differences

The NFP board of trustees' composition differs in several significant ways from that of a for-profit board of directors: larger boards, use of an executive director, fewer inside directors, limited managerial experience and support services, fixed terms of service, and less time required of and devoted by trustees. Moreover, from our study of 103 NFP organizations, we found that many trustees ignore the task of discussing policies and accept the de facto decisions of the executive director, though such neglect and acceptance seem to vary with the size of the organization.[2]

### *Size of the Boards*

Although many organizations begin with only one trustee (who single-handedly pays for operating deficits), most NFP boards range from medium to huge in size. The number of members is an obvious difference between for-profit and not-for-profit boards. A Conference Board study shows median director board size to be in the 10-to-15 member range.[3] However, an NFP usually has upward of 30 members (some performing arts groups and other NFPs we studied have more than 100 trustees). These large numbers of people are broken up into such groups as officers and board trustees, honorary trustees, advisory trustees and a host of committees.

One music association lists 36 board members, 6 honoraries and 31 advisory members. There are also 44 chairmen of committees. And that's not all. There is also a council of guilds, with 21 chairmen and advisers, and an association center (with 18 board members).

Some executive directors prefer a large board because it satisfies volunteers' desires for nominal involvement while leaving the director in control. Some trustees also prefer a large board because they enjoy the public platform, the business contacts and the opportunity to avoid individual responsibility.

**Many trustees do not participate in strategic decisions because they find it difficult to infuse their values into the strategic process.... The neutralization of their values tends to reinforce the executive director's value system.... A large board permits volunteer trustees to dissociate themselves from controversial board actions.**

This difference in board size is crucial to the determination of organizational objectives and goals. Evidence about strategy formulation stresses the significance of decision makers' personal values. "In business," writes Kenneth R. Andrews, "there is no way to divorce the decision determining the most sensible economic strategy for a company from the personal values of those who make the choice." [4] A vast array of personalities may dilute any identifiable value system, and the diverse value systems of, say, 100 trustees tend to neutralize each other.

The foregoing leads to three observations. First, many trustees do not participate in strategic decisions because they find it difficult to infuse their values into the strategic process. Second, the neutralization of their values tends to reinforce the executive director's value system. Finally, a large board permits volunteer trustees to dissociate themselves from controversial board actions.

### *Use of Insiders*

The two kinds of boards also differ dramatically in the number of inside members they have. Although the pri-

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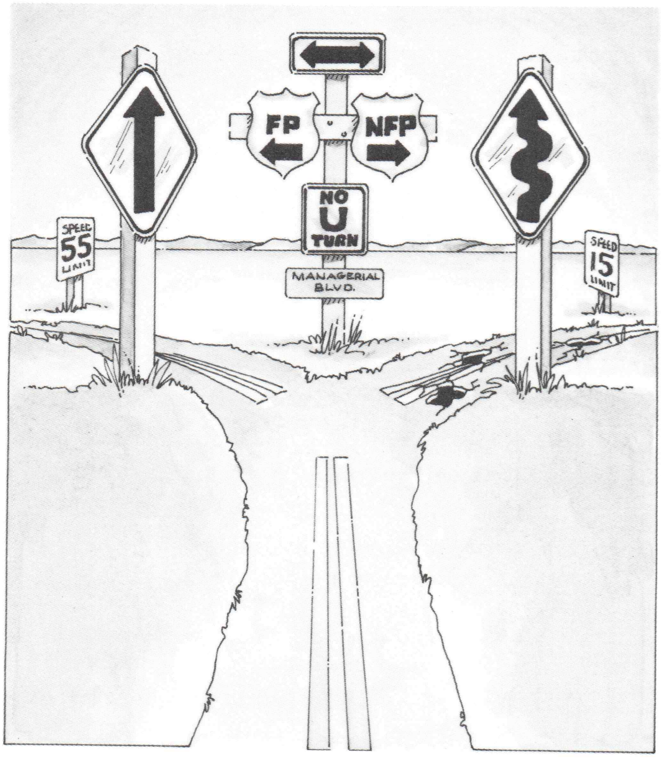
vate sector has stressed the importance of outside directors in recent years, the board chairmen and chief executive officers (CEOs) still dominate. We estimate that inside corporate directors still make up 40 percent to 50 percent, on average, of for-profit boards.

In contrast, on NFP boards the executive director is usually the only inside member—and often the only one who regularly attends meetings. And, while some executive directors may allow the staff to deal directly with the board, this is not the norm. Indeed, trustees who try to get to know staff members and learn about their activities are sometimes perceived as meddling.




Because of the presence of inside directors, the for-profit board is assured direct information flow from functional officers. These inside directors (often from finance) provide an immediate, informed resource on which to base board policy or operational considerations. Our study finds that such direct expertise is rarely present on the board of trustees. Thus, there is a limit set on the flow of key information, even to dedicated trustees.

### *Managerial Experience and Support Services*

In addition to possessing insider strength, boards of directors have twice the business representation NFPs have (75 percent versus 37 percent). While corporate boards added consumers and public officials to their ranks in the 1970s, today 99 percent of their directors can be classified as having managerial and/or professional experience. As a Conference Board study revealed, 75 percent of the outside directors on corporate boards are business people, with the other 25 percent largely from professional or business backgrounds. Furthermore, inside directors are by definition directly involved in the running of an organization.

In marked contrast, one survey showed that 22 percent of NFP trustees lacked direct managerial experience.[5] Many other trustees — such as members of the clergy, artists, politicians and physicians—are usually not even management oriented. All in all, less than half of NFPs' trustee ranks are filled by business people.

Additionally, the director board can be considered superior to the trustee board to the extent that age correlates with managerial experience. Approximately 95 percent of directors in the study just mentioned were in the 50-to-65 age range, reflecting at least three decades of adulthood and active business careers. In contrast, only about 40 percent of the trustees were that age; 17 percent were in the 75-and-over bracket and 38 percent were under 50.[6]

Finally, small and medium-sized NFPs have almost always lacked strong support services. Financial constraints alone have limited their ability to hire consultants, auditors, lawyers or marketing experts. On the other hand, all corporations have the advantage of such support services, and these services can be evaluated and enhanced by outside directors.

### *Continuity of Service*

Director boards generally have no fixed term of service, and a change in chairman or CEO can mark a major shift in corporate activity—especially activity related to strategic management. Ten years of board service is normal, and rotation of committee memberships is the exception rather than the rule. (Less than 10 percent of corporate executive committees rotate their members; other committee rotation is virtually nil.)

In comparison, NFP organizations often have fixed terms for trustees (two to five years), and the chairmanship usually rotates every year or two. These shorter terms meet the objectives of the volunteer trustees: they can move from board to board with minimal service and no loss of face. On the other hand, executive directors sometimes find this rapid turnover detrimental to long-term projects. Thus, the trustee board faces much more rapid turnover, a continuing reeducation process and a greater risk of not covering all the management bases. We recognize, however, that — to avoid organizational stasis — many NFPs willingly risk having a board with little experience or continuity.

### *Time Required of or Devoted by Trustees*

Whereas board size and composition are easy to quantify, the amount of time members devote to board work is less

so, especially in NFP organizations. We estimate that attendance of corporate directors is 90 percent or better. Trustees, however, are not that consistent; according to surveyed executive directors' estimates, trustee attendance ranges between 50 percent and 60 percent.[7]

We estimate the average time per month required of an outside corporate member at four to six hours, exclusive of committee assignments. Trustees sometimes contribute a lot more than that, sometimes a lot less. Their activity varies from those who do not attend (but try to help when called) to those who work virtually full time. Trustee contributions range from 2 to 100 hours per month.[8] For committee chairmen this wide range can cause considerable frustration.

Not only are corporate boards more consistent in their demands on directors' time, they also meet less than do trustee boards. Whereas quarterly directors' meetings of half a day (excluding social activities) are the norm, trustees generally meet on a monthly basis—often for only one to three hours. All in all, not-for-profit organizations consume more meeting time than do for-profit boards.

**The trustee board faces much more rapid turnover, a continuing reeducation process and a greater risk of not covering all the management bases.**

Each of these elements plays a part in distinguishing boards of trustees from boards of directors and in explaining why trustees usually fail to assist with policy decision making. Few organizations, however, have analyzed such differences or have considered what implications they hold for policymaking.

### *Range of Activities*

Another major difference between directors and trustees is in their range of activities. Directors' key functions include selection of the chief executive officer, review of financial performance, consideration of the social impact of corporate actions and development of policies plus the procedures with which to implement them. Note that the first three functions are primarily formulative and evaluative; only this last function edges into the area of operations.

Such activities make up only a fraction of the functions trustees perform. In practice, trustees are a significant operational arm of their organizations. In nearly all of the NFPs we examined, they are expected to play an active role in fund raising—whether those funds come from public sources, private donors or foundations. (Indeed, in our experience as trustees, 90 percent of our time was devoted to fund raising.)

Moreover, many organizations, especially the smaller ones, expect each trustee to make sizable personal contributions and to donate professional time when appropriate (accountants and lawyers are always in short supply). NFPs also ask their trustees to get involved in community relations; at times they require direct involvement in politics. A trustee may represent, say, the Little League petitioning the parks and recreation board or the community arts council asking local government officials for meeting space.

Local political aspirants are often the honored guests at fund-raising dinners, and in recent years executive directors have frequently invited politicians and celebrities to local television marathons or to dinners. This interplay between NFP organizations and political institutions often lies at the heart of an NFP fund-raising system, and trustees are expected to play a part in such interchanges.

### *Implementation and Measurement*

For-profit programs are measured at fixed intervals according to their short-term and long-term profitability, general financial status, market performance, growth patterns and a variety of other benchmarks. Many NFP organizations, such as churches and educational groups, have few of these guideposts available because of the nature of their missions and their accounting systems. Some NFPs have few if any quantitative tools with which to steer their activities. With the exception of foundation or government requirements, many of the smaller organizations do not even prepare annual statements or other reports. Moreover, the not-for-profit organizations we studied seldom use quantitative methods to measure their achievements or to track their progress toward specific goals.

So a major difference between the for-profit and the not-for-profit sectors is the control methodology each uses. Balance sheet, income, or source and use-of-funds statements, and cash flow projections should mean similar things to the trustee and the director. However, broad use of fund accounting in NFPs has created a vast gulf between the quality of their accounting control and that of business organizations. This gap means that many business-oriented trustees can't even glean essential information from NFP financial statements.

Research has shown that NFP organizations' control difficulties are compounded by the absence or inadequacy of income and service-delivery measures. One study of 42 major performing arts companies found that operating revenues fell short by 15 percent to 70 percent.[9] By business standards, these organizations are periodically or forever bankrupt, at least on paper. Local and regional NFP organizations in the arts often suffer from chronic bankruptcy—and fail when the "angels" they count on to bail them out lose interest in covering their deficits.

The accounting, control and professional management concerns of NFPs may be compounded by the board's em-

phasis on short-term results. Even in the few instances where accounting controls exist, they are not used for long-term considerations. Certainly the use of managerial control systems could have a dramatic influence on not-for-profits' policy decisions and on their ability to achieve their objectives.

### *Rewards and "Punishments"*

Apart from monetary compensation, directors and trustees are motivated, rewarded and "punished" by many of the same things. Prestige and opportunities for greater responsibility, reelection and public recognition are motivators of both for-profit and not-for-profit board members. When trustees don't get paid for their efforts, they tend to be "paid" with psychic rewards—they know they are performing a recognized public service.

At the CEO or executive director level, however, the two types of reward systems differ greatly. Just as directors serve longer terms than trustees, the corporate CEO is given more tangible guarantees and incentives (beyond compensation levels), and these incentives encourage independent action. Although some companies do not provide tenure or severance protection, they tend to be the ones that promote an executive to CEO from within after many years of service. Moreover, a CEO hired from the outside is often given the protection of a multiyear commitment.

Many NFPs, in contrast, either hire an executive director from the outside (with little if any assurance of employment longevity) or promote someone from within who has professional, not administrative, expertise — again without offering employment security. Because executive directors' appointments are often renewed annually or at the pleasure of the board, two things commonly occur. Either the executive director will offend enough trustees over time so that he or she must change jobs every few years, or that person will exercise minimal leadership and no initiative. Survival instincts may keep an executive director in the job, but deferring totally to the whims of trustees can reduce the person's ability to initiate policy changes or innovations.

If an executive director does attain tenure, there is still a danger (as in the for-profit sector) that the trustees will play only a rubber-stamp role. In cases where trustees do not measure NFP performance periodically, the organization can suffer from the opposite extreme; an overly confident executive director may run the organization without allowing the board of trustees any real influence or control.

Although it's often difficult to hire professional managers for NFP organizations, discharging them can be even more difficult. Commonplace is the manager who has been "on the way out" for several years. Forcing separation or firing is not a pleasant task for the board; thus, trustees often seek the easy way out and fail to document reasons for discharge. The director can usually outwait and outlast a "controversial" board member. Furthermore, if performance standards are unclear, it may be impossible for a volunteer to muster enough forces to get the director fired.

Since lack of tangible goals and benchmarks is a big part of many not-for-profits' problems, the bonus incentive (common to private industry but rarely used in this sector) could be of tremendous benefit here. In one chamber of commerce we studied, the executive director was hired from the private sector. He insisted on an annual bonus tied to specific performance goals and then carried the bonus program in business-sector style to other salaried employees. The bonus was both a tangible reward and a symbol of the organization's drive to achieve the chamber's goals. Although many trustee boards have been reluctant to employ bonuses or business perks, the important point for NFP organizations is their value as tools for rewarding and motivating excellent performance.

### Motivating Volunteers

NFP organizations have an additional source of strength and weakness—volunteer trustees, who are usually led by the executive director. Volunteerism is a concept almost unique to the not-for-profit world. The NFP organization that relies largely on volunteers can be a brilliant success or a miserable failure. Most, however, fluctuate between mediocrity and success. What are good results predicated on? Offering rewards, giving recognition, asking considerable involvement and getting projects running are all methods of motivating volunteers.

**Of all the rewards available to board members, ...our study suggests that the organization's mission is the trustees' overriding concern and the foundation of their sense of meeting a need.**

One important segment of NFP strategic management pertains to marketing and the volunteer trustee. On a national basis, NFP organizations mirror private businesses in their use of advertising—direct mail, sales campaigns and so on. At the local level, NFP organizations tend to rely heavily on volunteers to carry out marketing efforts. This cadre of volunteers often has the power to build or destroy an organization; therefore, a system of rewards should be part of the strategic as well as the marketing system.

The perceived value of an NFP mission—especially in religious organizations—may be the prime reward of the volunteer trustee. Serving on the board can provide trustees, as it does corporate directors, with a sense of power. And, while the homogeneity of a business board can give it operating strength, the breadth of contacts provided by an NFP board can be extremely valuable. Some would-be trustees openly seek board seats where there is an opportunity to develop contacts that might lead to monetary

pay-offs. Of all the rewards available to board members, however, our study suggests that the organization's mission is the trustees' overriding concern and the foundation of their sense of meeting a need.

### Trustee-Director Relationships

Because small NFPs in particular rarely attract trustees of means with ample time to spare, many smaller nonprofits — such as Little League, Girl Scouts, religious groups and social services — depend on wage earners, housewives, local people in business and professionals, all of whom have little free time. These trustees, because of their busy schedules, must rely on the executive director for a flow of information, definition of their role and, frequently, evaluation of the organization's achievement of its goals. Thus, the major role of any trustee (that is, policy formulation) is usually lost or forgotten. Formulation of goals and policies is then automatically relegated to the executive director, and therefore he or she practically has the power of CEO and corporate board all in one. Moreover, conflict between executive directors and trustees is all too common in NFP organizations, especially in middle-sized and small nonprofits (where differences may become personal).

For example, the executive director of a housing foundation believed that the foundation's prime mission was to build housing for the unemployed. His dream was to offer families opportunities for cooperative buying, manufacturing of furniture and marketing of handmade artifacts— and to have everyone employed in one of these areas. He hoped such programs would help people get off the welfare rolls.

But the trustees, who provided a good part of the capital, were determined not to limit the beneficiaries to those who sought cooperative employment. Instead, they argued that each person should have the right to seek employment outside the cooperative setup. This difference of opinion led to an unresolvable deadlock. And, because the executive director had a long-term contract, the foundation was thereafter able to accomplish very little.[10]

Although such conflicts are an everyday occurrence in NFP organizations, they are quite unusual for CEOs and boards of directors. In the business sector, it is acceptable for the CEO to, in effect, select new board members. Frequently, the chief executive nominates friends or business associates as well as company officers.

In contrast, in NFP organizations the trustees—not the executive director—select friends interested in joining the enterprise. This selection method means that the values of trustees sometimes get top billing. Consequently, disagreements may arise when the executive director and trustees attempt to reach strategic decisions together. If a strong-minded executive director is in control, war is declared and the organization all but stops functioning.

The volunteer president's short term of office translates into nearsighted strategic decisions. Because of so much turnover, the organization can't commit itself to long-term objectives and the board can't evaluate the executive director's performance in the context of long-run goals. Trustees are forever putting out fires. Moreover, time limitations encourage the executive director to control the strategic decision process. (Although in theory both director and trustee boards should make policy decisions, it is of interest to note that CEOs and executive directors have control of strategic management even though their power is derived differently.)

Because the not-for-profit organization must periodically decide its future — whether implicitly or explicitly — the personality of the executive director necessarily influences the setting of objectives. The NFP executive directors we studied generally do not rank high compared with CEOs on such dimensions as "vision, authority and perseverance."[11] And trustee boards don't do much better. All in all, the strategic management void created by an unwieldy and ever-changing board is compounded by executive directors whose job survival requires satisfying trustees within a limited term.

**The strategic management void created by an unwieldy and ever-changing board is compounded by the executive directors whose job survival requires satisfying trustees within a limited term.**

### Caveats and Suggestions

To sum up, NFP organizations' policymakers tend to enter the stage from three directions. First comes the professional director, whose purpose is to promote the mission of the organization (and to keep his job). Next enters the volunteer business leader, motivated to become a trustee by a sense of mission plus a strong commitment to fulfill social responsibilities. The third person joining the cast is the volunteer trustee who becomes a trustee because it is the "right" thing to do and because connections made on the board may be useful for professional advancement. In countless organizations, each of these three actors plays a major, though sometimes counterproductive, role.

So how can not-for-profit organizations remedy the problems that hinder effective boards? Our research suggests that the reader who is a trustee or an executive director can encourage the following conditions or actions to enhance strategic management:

- You need an executive director and trustees who believe in the NFP's mission and are willing to become involved in all appropriate managerial activities. You should

ensure that the trustees and the executive director hold many of the same values; otherwise strategic planning will be difficult if not impossible.

- When selecting trustees, do not overlook the power of economics, power, prestige and self-esteem as motivators for involvement. Moreover, consider the financial or other type of contributions a trustee might make. Someone who

**Encourage a team spirit among trustees, the executive director and other professional staff, and all volunteers. Successful not-for-profits must have committed people at all levels; and professionals and volunteers alike must be well led to maximize their success.**

can share computer time, printing services, secretarial or mailing assistance, or corporate executives can be very valuable. Also remember, of course, that you need a balance of skills and resources for the board.

- Notify potential trustees, preferably in writing, as to the number of hours or days per month that they should allocate to the organization. Define board work and other activities. Let trustees know you expect an honest commitment to time schedules. (For those trustees who wish to be active in several not-for-profit organizations, a "two season" schedule can be managed easily if the trustee picks such commitments carefully.)

- Limit the number of trustees responsible for decisions (i.e., the full board) to between 10 and 15 people. The board should operate on a staggered or continuum schedule. Define carefully the limited powers of additional members (and you should call them something other than trustees, perhaps "honorary board members").

- Take care when selecting volunteers for the strategic management committee, which should be limited to five members or fewer. Each person on the committee should have expertise in some area of value to the planning process (e.g., finance, control, fund raising, marketing). These areas of specialization should be incorporated in the NFP's plan, as should the mission and values of the organization.

- For the benefit of the executive director as well as the trustees, clarify the fund-raising function. Characterize it in terms of either dollars or hours of activity.

It is prudent to have trustees put in writing their commitment to fund raising. Furthermore, corporate foundations should make their fund-raising commitments clear before their representatives join your board.

Don't leave the area of special funding solely to the board of trustees. Designate one trustee or a professional fund raiser as the chief organizer for short-term and long-term money-getting programs.

Although bequests, large grants from foundations and other special gifts offer dramatic opportunities for nonprofits, do not forget that they carry risks. If you divert such funds to normal operations, the organization becomes vulnerable to future budget cuts. But special short-term projects, capital expenditures and seed money for future projects are all appropriate uses of such funds.

Remember that successful organizations allocate, where permissible, part of their current funds to further long-term financial stability.

- Given changing tax laws and tighter public budgets, a board must address finances realistically. The organization that avoids overoptimistic projections of income is spared drastic year-end cutbacks. Because NFPs have a reputation for beginning outlandish projects without concern for their budgetary impact, troubled trustees must speak up and discourage a trustee or executive director's pet project if its financial impact might be disastrous.

- Don't avoid bonuses or other incentive systems common to private business for executive directors or other members of the professional staff. Connect such bonuses to performance, and then empower the compensation committee to handle negotiations.

- Finally, encourage a team spirit among trustees, the executive director and other professional staff, and all volunteers. Successful NFPs must have committed people at all levels; and professionals and volunteers alike must be well led to maximize their success. Δ

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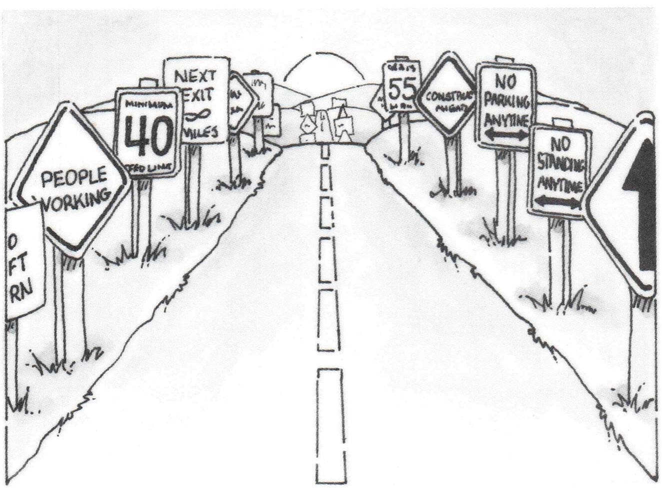
# Making Boards Work Better

## An Afterword




*Alan Ullberg*

These insights from the *Harvard Business Review* are valuable and timely for the museum world, and they deserve thoughtful consideration. Over the past decade, the responsibility and liability of museum boards and their individual trustees have been the focus of an increasing public interest.[1] The position of the typical museum trustee has been changing from mostly honorary to real accountability for the management of the institution. Yet too many museum boards are not organized to take control commensurate with their responsibility and liability. Too often the structure and operating procedures of a board leave it with little real authority to manage. The data and suggestions of Israel Unterman and Richard Hart Davis can be put to use in restructuring museum boards and making them work better.

Since selection of trustees may well determine how a board functions, the authors suggest that nominating committees look for candidates who are oriented to business methods and want to exercise management oversight. Many boards may be representative of the museum's constituency or supporters, but their members are not trained or disposed to control. Changes in structure, policy and operating procedures may be necessary before management-oriented trustees will consent to serve, but the authors provide suggestions for achieving them. For example, the greater the degree to which the museum has a statement of purpose that is understood and shared by the board and the executive director, the greater the chance it will attract clear-eyed, hard-working persons. The potential trustee who is serious about helping the museum function more effectively will shy away from the institution with a history of dissension among board members and between the board and the executive director. Likewise this trustee will avoid a board structured in such a way that it has little real effect on what goes on in the museum.

During selection and after, trustees need orientation to their new status and responsibilities. Each museum board should develop its own traditions for the education of new trustees.[2] An accepted tradition, perhaps even ritualized, could prevent the orientation from being perceived by the new trustee as an affront to intelligence and worldliness. In our society there is no general education for trusteeship; most instruction is for self-advancement, not for service. Few people understand what it means to be a public fiduciary—one responsible for an important activity carried out for the benefit of society-at-large. Trustees need to develop the ethic of the professional as part of their orientation and in-service education.

Trustees should have specific instruction on the appropriate sphere or range for their decision making. Even many who are management-oriented and want to work hard for their institution do not know the difference between the trustee's responsibility to set goals and policy and the staff's duty to administer. The board may authorize a new staff position as part of its approval of the budget, but the museum director should fill that position. The board should discuss and approve strategy and goals for fund raising, recognizing its ultimate responsibility for this area. Research, the dissemination of information and most of the specific requests for funds should be made by the staff. Outside fund-raising counsel may complement board and staff efforts. As appropriate and necessary, board members should personally communicate and meet with individual and organizational funding sources. Here there needs to be a partnership of board and staff members, ensuring that the most effective use is made of each. But the trustee who spends all available time actually raising money cannot fulfill the responsibility to oversee the museum.

As to structure, the smaller board is the strong recommendation here. It can be more homogeneous of purpose and effective in action. Meetings can be tightly focused on strategy and policy. In this atmosphere persons from business, finance and law are more likely to exercise their professional skills, for they know their deliberations and votes

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count. The museum with the large board could work toward a smaller, more effective one by shifting some of its trustees to working committee memberships, support groups or honorary positions in which they would remain affiliated with the museum and available to help.

We are told that boards need to be better informed, to have more knowledge of the inner workings of the institution. Again the small board works better; 12 to 15 people can be kept abreast of important matters — and with far less staff effort — than a board of 30 or more. Individual trustees also could gain an understanding of what goes on inside the museum by meeting with the heads of major units as part of committee assignments to develop long-range plans.[3] The trained or "professionalized" trustee should be expected to refrain from meddling in administration, and the professional staff member should not lobby trustees in this committee setting. Outside consultants in specific areas of museum management are another good source of direct information for board members. Their reports provide data from another perspective, though the director's role as the channel for information flow is preserved since the director should concur in hiring them.

**Museum boards must take control of their institutions. This is imperative if boards are to meet their legal responsibilities and if museums are to be kept as independent of government as possible.**

Should museum trustees get honorariums for attending board meetings? Would a payment of $100 to $200 to prepare for and attend a board meeting be an effective investment in trustee attention to management? Trustees might take board meetings more seriously, making board service more a job than an honor. Payment would distinguish clearly between trustees who carry full legal responsibility and liability and those individuals who perform committee and other support work as volunteers. Budgeting honorariums for trustees would force the museum to consider holding fewer board meetings. With a financial constraint, meetings would tend to be scheduled for the management needs of the museum and not from tradition or the desires of some trustees to keep up social and business contacts.

Smaller boards that function more efficiently would diminish the power of many executive committees and necessitate that they be smaller and confined to interim decision making. Executive committees still would be needed, especially if boards meet less frequently, but with small boards and smaller executive committees there is less chance for divergence of purpose and policy between them.

The authors suggest that with a smaller board there is more congruence between the museum director's agenda for the organization and that of the trustees. The flow of information between director and board is easier because of shared assumptions and goals. The director should be less threatened by trustee interaction directly with senior staff or by the reviews and reports of outside consultants. There should be confidence that the board is more united in its goals and less easily pushed off course than is the larger board with a diffuseness of purposes.

How can the relationship between the board and the director be more effective? Frequent turnover at the director level gives an institution a reputation for quixotic management and divergence of purposes at the board level. The directorship is viewed as a short-term position, a holding action accomplished by balancing factions of the board against each other. The director may be careful not to attempt very much, lest the attention or envy of detractors be aroused. The museum will not be able to attract candidates who want to make a long-term commitment to serve.

Written employment contracts can increase continuity of service by directors and make boards take more seriously their hiring and firing. The contract should be for a term of three to five years and have a clear statement of the director's duties, milestones and guidelines for performance and salary reviews, plus standards for termination and severance payments. The authors strongly suggest that the director's compensation be tied directly to performance and accomplishments.

With a contract the director is committed to stay and to work for the museum through good and bad times. With some security for the bad times the director should be more comfortable in providing the board with information that may reflect unfavorably upon staff performance. Knowing that the contractual assurances provide for personal needs, the director should be able to concentrate more energy on the short- and long-range needs of the museum.

Museum boards must take control of their institutions. This is imperative if boards are to meet their legal responsibilities and if museums are to be kept as independent of government as possible. By implementing these suggestions from the pages of the *Harvard Business Review*, museums can move toward achieving these goals. ∆

**Notes**

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# Is Anyone Out There?

## Audience and Communication

*Marlene Chambers*


***Drawing by Modell; © 1983, New Yorker Magazine, Inc.***

Perhaps in homage to the captains of industry who first founded and endowed them, American art museums have traditionally followed a laissez-faire philosophy toward the public audiences for whom they were presumably built. Great art, it went without saying, was imbued with some mysterious power to uplift and soothe the savage, and perhaps revolutionary, soul of the common man. Beauty could speak volumes and surely needed no interpreter.[1]

Small wonder, then, that today's art museums still frequently lack the wide support they seek. It should come as no surprise that the councilmen and legislators who dispense public funds see the art museum as a luxury they can ill afford in times of economic hardship. An elitist image dies hard—especially when it is reinforced daily by unmistakable signs of indifference toward the "have-nots."

That the great majority of Americans feel deprived in this sphere—locked out from a world in which beauty is intelligible as well as affective—is clear from the efforts many of them make to catch up. They attend lectures, subscribe to art magazines and buy books and exhibition catalogs in the hope of finding an "open sesame" to the world of art. Even more eagerly, they roam museum galleries, peering expectantly at labels, watching "educational" videotapes, consulting handbooks and gallery guides—and turning away more perplexed than ever.

The tragic fact is that those who write books about art, those who prepare gallery guides and labels and even those who lecture publicly continue to address an audience of the "happy few." Everything in their training and experience has prepared them to assume an audience of peers—with a high level of motivation, reading skill and specialized knowledge.[2] Nothing in their background has suggested the limited, and limiting, nature of this viewpoint.

Though they will admit that an introductory course in art appreciation may not be part of everyone's educational background, most art museum professionals discount this statistical reality in a way that diffuses its practical impact on their performance. One easy defense against having to deal with this unpleasant truth is to devalue the great majority of Americans who have had little or no formal training in art—the "unwashed" millions. A more subtle defense is to devalue the difficulty this audience might have in dealing with an unfamiliar technical vocabulary and subject.[3]

The first of these defensive attitudes is unabashedly elitist, the second self-righteously democratic. Neither seeks to address the basic problem: What is the best way to communicate with a lay audience of intelligent adults? Both postures share a kind of intellectual provincialism based on a narrow range of cultural experiences. To assume an inherent stupidity in those who do not already know the information we have spent a lifetime acquiring only reveals our own narrow-mindedness. But to assume that we can communicate with this group in the same way we would with another specialist is equally parochial. The end result of both attitudes is the same. The museum staff is excused from further effort. The museum audience is dismissed as either too dumb to understand what the staff is talking about or smart enough to understand the specialist no matter what he has to say or how he says it.

There has been, I think, yet another compelling and

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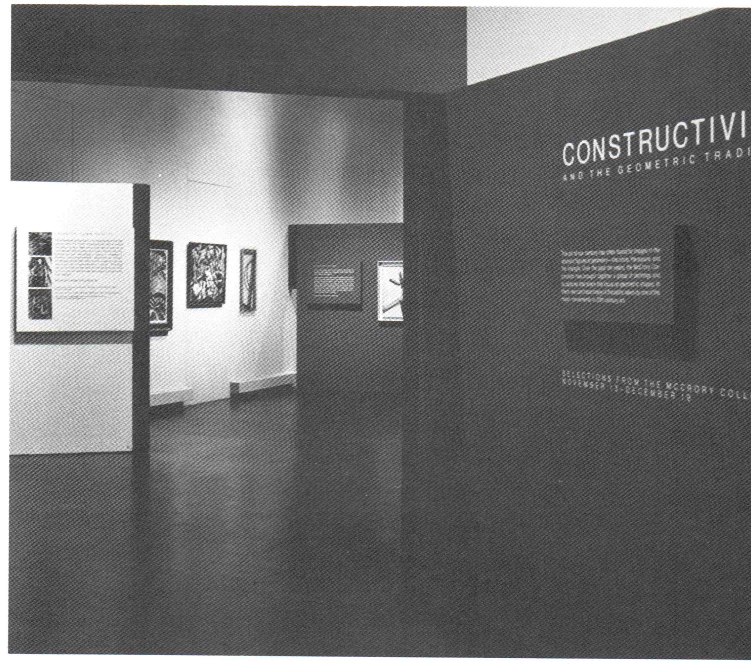
unexamined stumbling block that has prevented the art museum from facing the issue of effective communication with the same energy it has devoted to other problems. Museums have been able, for instance, to attack the esthetic questions of exhibition design with gusto, secure in the knowledge that improved display techniques would delight audiences and inspire the kudos of fellow professionals. To address fully and honestly the issue of improved communication with public audiences, however, means possible exposure to ridicule. When a written message, the most explicit medium for communication, is involved, the risk of exposure is at its greatest. Although this fear is usually cloaked in altruistic injunctions against "insulting the intelligence" of the audience, it actually betrays the very human desire to appear before one's peers in the best possible light.

The academic training of the museum professional has too often encouraged the use of language that is intelligible only to other initiates. The very nature of the student-teacher relationship sets up the false expectation of a writer-reader relationship in which the writer is assured of the continuous and rapt attention of a reader bent only on judging his erudition. The educational system, thus, has rewarded the ability to manipulate specialized vocabulary and sometimes, sadly, the skillful use of rhetoric to conceal the absence of substantive ideas. To its credit, the system has also encouraged the application of rigorous research techniques and standards of verification, as well as a respect for objective and logical discourse. Indeed, these academic attitudes and proficiencies serve very well in the formal atmosphere of the scholarly article, the catalogue raisonné, the monograph and even certain exhibition catalogs. The audience for these publications is made up of the museum professional's peers—other art historians or well-informed connoisseurs and collectors.

Though they may be appropriate in certain academic or formal contexts, these writing strategies are not adequate to the purpose of communication with the museum's general audience; indeed, they operate independently of the need to consider audience at all.[4] Specialized art historical terminology comes across to the museum visitor as jargon. All those conditional phrases and clauses that seem necessary in academic writing are just so many hurdles to the art novice in search of main ideas. The interesting but irrelevant fact is truly arcane in the public text. Yet many art professionals really believe that the institution's reputation would crumble if the same standards were not applied to both scholarly and public communications. And with the institution's reputation, of course, their own would come tumbling down. Thus it is that the issue has come to be freighted with an emotional content that is difficult to dislodge.

**The academic training of the museum professional has too often encouraged the use of language that is intelligible only to other initiates.**




*The entrance to the* Constructivism *exhibition. Note that the exhibit design reflects principles of constructivist architecture. The exhibit walls create a strong series of receding planes.*

Perhaps the emphasis that museums have recently begun to place on marketing techniques will extend beyond advertising hype and circuses to a critical assessment of their product. Successful marketing campaigns depend on careful product analysis as much as on market analysis. The "new and improved" museum must be "new and improved." A worthwhile museum visit does not auto-

matically follow from the heightened expectations of the audience, although the expectations themselves inevitably result from an ambitious advertising program. In fact, raising expectations is a dangerous gamble in long-term market success unless these expectations can be effectively met.[5] The more rave reviews we hear about a film or a new restaurant, the more disappointed we are by mediocrity when we ourselves sample the product.

To judge by their rush to hire marketing consultants, museum administrators now seem convinced that the continued existence of their institutions depends on

securing a large public audience. From here, it is but a small step to a recognition of the need to upgrade the quality of the museum experience. But, even when the necessity for improved communication is perceived as part of this task, habitual modes of response continue to prevent radical change or experimentation. Traditional attitudes toward the art museum audience and conventional rationales for discounting or denying this audience's needs still inhibit the museum professional's willingness to address public communication as a special problem with special requirements.

This situation was brought home to me with considerable force as the Denver Art Museum staff began to plan its presentation of yet another temporary exhibition—selections from the McCrory Corporation's collection of 20th-century geometric art. Under the title *Constructivism and the Geometric Tradition* (hardly a name to attract crowds of visitors), the exhibition was to open in Denver as the first stop on its second national tour. Because it would be on view little more than a month, our limited staff resources could not be heavily committed to the exhibition. Although the show was "canned" in the sense of traveling complete with catalog and object identification labels, it did not come with brochures or didactic gallery panels. Supporting material of this sort had been developed independently, however, by some of the museums that had hosted its first tour. Under the circumstances, our staff decided to short-cut its own efforts by using materials prepared by the earlier tour participants—the sort of resource sharing supported by most museum professionals.

**Specialized art historical terminology comes across to the museum visitor as jargon. All those conditional phrases and clauses that seem necessary in academic writing are just so many hurdles to the art novice in search of main ideas.**

Two museums were able to supply printed gallery brochure texts, and another sent photocopies of the explanatory gallery labels used when the collection had appeared there. Because of printing deadlines, one of the anonymously written brochures was selected for reprinting, with only minor changes to improve its clarity and coherence. But the gallery text was judged by our curator to be "unreadable." Her evaluation was based on the inordinate length of each label and the liberal use of strings of artists' names throughout the text. For example, "The Russian Avant-Garde" label contained this sentence:

> Some of the most radical and influential movements of 20th century art can be identified with the Russian avant-garde—the experimental artists who invented and developed ideas such as Rayonnism (Mikhail Larionov and Natalia Gontcharova), Suprematism (Kasimir Malevich, Ivan Kliunkov (Kliun), Ivan Puni) and Constructivism (Vladimir Tatlin, Lazar (El) Lissitzky, Alexander Rodchenko, Liubov Popova, Alexandra Exter, Naum Gabo).

But other stumbling blocks to accessibility challenged the most knowledgeable reader at every turn. The nonspecialist could hardly be expected to plow through breathtakingly long sentences, technical terminology, references to little-known art movements and high-flown, empty rhetoric. The label quoted above continues:

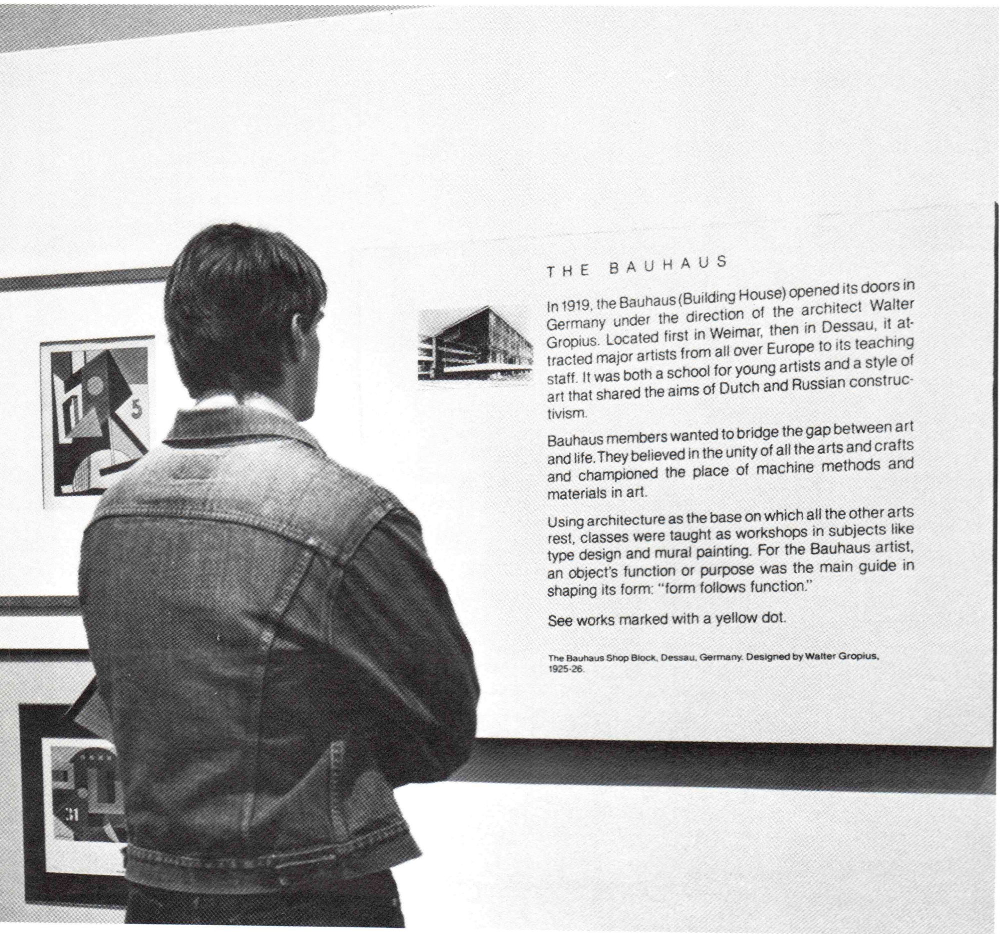
> Perhaps the most astonishing characteristic of the Russian avant-garde is the swiftness with which its representatives absorbed and developed styles such as French Cubism and Italian Futurism, combining them with indigenous cultural traditions and arriving at unique pictorial conclusions. For example, the dramatic shift from figurative to non-figurative art occurred almost overnight—with Tatlin's creation of his first abstract relief early in 1914 and with the public showing of Malevich's famous *Black Square* at the exhibition "0.10" in Petrograd in 1915.

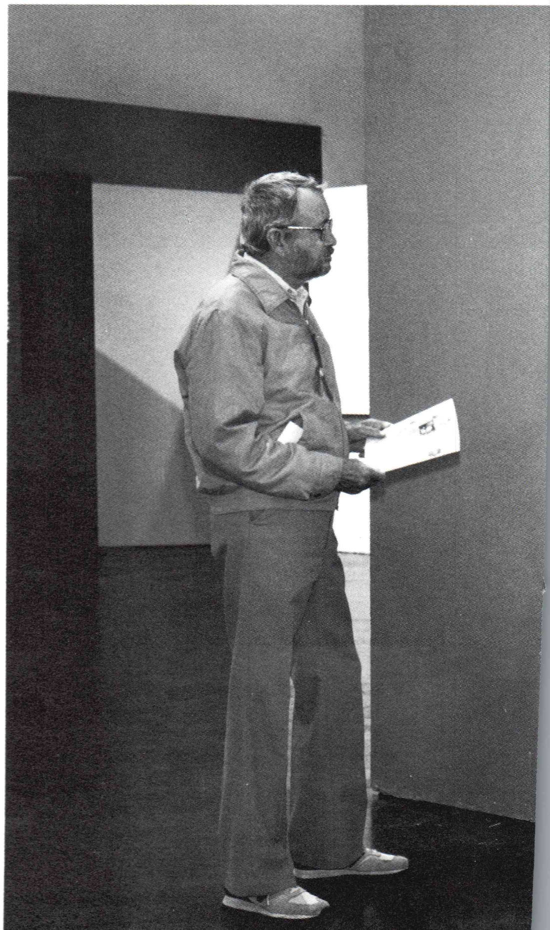
Our first quotation contains 58 words. The average sentence length of the 13-sentence label is 37½ words. Specialized terms like *pictorial, figurative* and *abstract* speak exactly and concisely to the art historian but mean little to the layman. Movements like Rayonnism, Suprematism and even Italian Futurism are not household words; their practitioners themselves sometimes argued violently about their definition. Phrases like "arriving at unique pictorial conclusions" can usually bear little examination. They sound delightfully weighty, but what do they mean? The use of *famous* to describe a painting the reader might never have heard of erects an unnecessary psychological barrier that is reinforced by irrelevant facts like the name of the exhibition at which the painting was first shown.

Since the curator and I agreed that the present labels were indigestible, we met to discuss alternatives. We could simply avoid the problem altogether by omitting any explanatory text from the walls—after all, these splendid works could speak for themselves, couldn't they? Or we could provide the minimal guideposts offered by the brochure subtitles, which organized the material into general movements and periods like "De Stijl," "The Bauhaus" and "American Abstract Artists." Presumably, if we had these words silk-screened at a large size near the group of works they related to, visitors could refer to the appropriate section of the gallery brochure to make sense of the exhibition. It was only at this point that we began to scrutinize the brochure text more closely in terms of its ability to interpret this difficult art for an audience that probably did not share our knowledge of art movements and concepts or our enthusiasm for nonobjective art. Too late, we realized the brochure text failed the layman in many of the same ways the labels did.

Our solution—a stopgap one at best in the time crunch that now confined our good intentions—was to organize our gallery labels along the lines of the brochure and to retain as many of the brochure subtitles as possible while giving them completely new accompanying texts. This decision allowed us to keep the rough chronology that gave some sequential order to the exhibition and to maintain a parallel between the brochure and the wall texts. But it also offered us a certain amount of freedom in determining new objectives for the labels, objectives that would shape the selection of information and the way it was presented from

***Primary colors and large type attract readers. Black-and-white photographs on label panels help readers understand concepts discussed in the labels.***



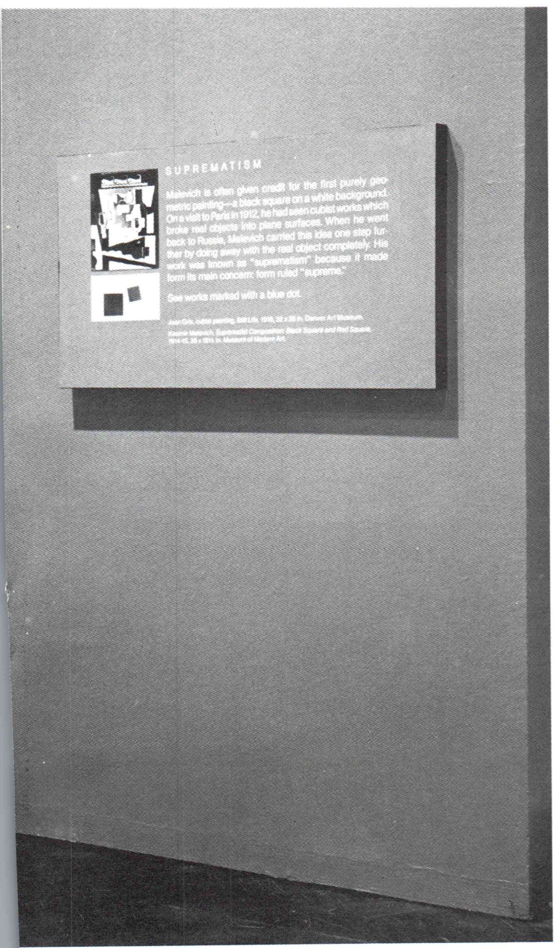



the nonspecialist's point of view, a point of view not previously taken into account by the exhibition's host museums.

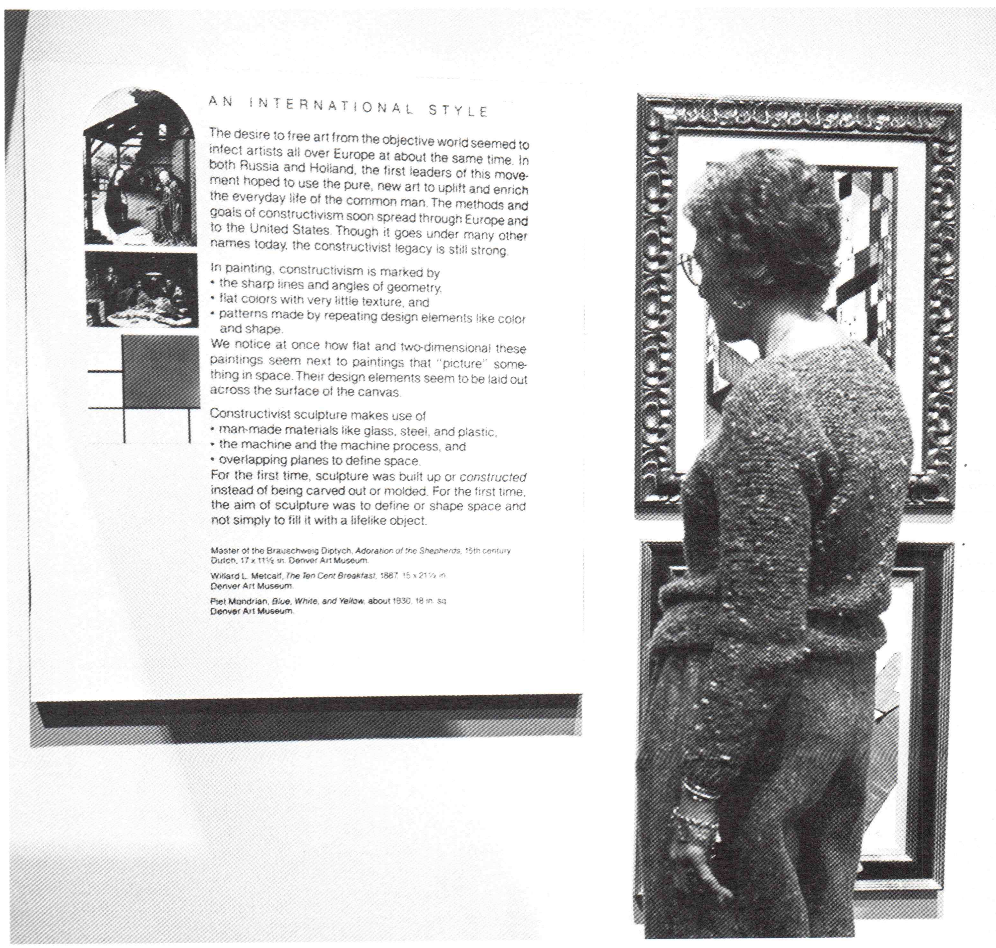
In establishing these objectives and thinking through the best means of accomplishing them, I realized for the first time how seldom the written communications of our art museums are determined by considerations of "audience" rather than subject matter. As writers, museum professionals behave like academics rather than skilled communicators. Our efforts are calculated to bring order to our subject only in relationship to itself, not in relationship to the actual gallery visitors who may or may not read our words. This is a normal and very common approach to writing, as teachers of composition have become increasingly aware.[6] Most of us tend to write for an audience that is implied in the subject itself, an audience that already knows all we know about the subject and that will simply be monitoring our ability to handle the material. But this approach will not do the job of communicating information of importance to the museum audience.

How can we improve our ability to communicate with this audience? First, we must find a way to analyze our audience's interests and needs. This can be done through surveys, informal interviews and focus groups, but the scope of these will have to be both broadened and narrowed to give us accurate guidelines — broadened to include information specifically pertinent to our communication problems and narrowed to evaluate individual components of specific exhibits. General demographic information of the sort sought in our marketing surveys is certainly relevant, but we need to know other critical facts like the exact amount of formal and informal art education our audiences bring to their art museum experiences and the areas of their esthetic and informational preferences. We must also measure more than the affective power of our exhibitions or their success in terms of conveying information. We must find effective ways to evaluate their ability to bring about attitudinal change.[7]

Second, we need to become aware of the communication research carried out by other museums and by experts in related fields like cognitive psychology, reading and composition. Studies like the one devised by Minda Borun and Maryanne Miller for the Franklin Institute Science Museum and Planetarium in Philadelphia can tell us




*A "telegraphic" listing of ideas makes them easy for the reader to grasp.*



much about label effectiveness.[8] We can take advantage of their results in preparing our own labels, as well as their research techniques in setting up similar experiments. Equally necessary to our success in the development of communication skills are studies by linguistics experts like William J. Vande Kopple. By applying the results of his research in "functional sentence perspective," we can improve our ability to make our texts easier to read and recall.[9] We can also make good use of the research of educational psychologists like Bonnie J.F. Meyer. Our com-

*The time line of the* Windows on the World *exhibition leads visitors to vignettes of seven specific cultures. Exhibit design and labels work together to emphasize both the interrelatedness and distinctiveness of the art of different times and places.*

## Sensory Overload
Sixties USA

The dizzying speed of modern communication has brought with it a strange paradox. Our world has become both smaller and larger. Man's victory over space and time has shrunk the earth to the size of a "global village." At the same time, the world that each of us meets every day has grown almost beyond our ability to take it all in. The age of "junk food" is also the age of sensory indigestion.

"Pop" art of the sixties mirrored our growing sense of mass culture–mass production, mass marketing, mass consumption. Artists tried to "act in the gap" between art and life by using the images, raw materials, and methods of popular culture. Art was no longer "about" life. It tried to include life itself. Artists invented new art forms like "environments" and "happenings"–theatrical events that used people as part of living environments. Old art forms changed to meet the desire to make life part of art. Paintings often included real three-dimensional objects. And canned art, like canned music and canned soup, came to be a meaningful symbol of our high-tech world.



munication models should take into account her impressive findings about how various kinds of organizational plans for writing can affect reading comprehension.[10]

Third, we need to have one or more writing specialists on the museum staff who can make use of these research conclusions to forge effective models of public communication by working closely with curators, museum educators and exhibit designers.[11] Lest this sound like special pleading, I offer one short "before and after" example from our *Constructivism* label project. This paragraph comes from the same label I have already quoted:

> The stellar members of the Russian avant-garde were Kasimir Malevich and Vladimir Tatlin, two very different artists who symbolized two opposing tendencies—the former towards a cryptic, deeply philosophical concept of art, the latter towards a pragmatic, material concept. Through Suprematism Malevich imbued his revolutionary interpretation of "painting as an end in itself" with a messianic purpose, as a result of which the entire universe was to be "suprematized." Tatlin, the engineer, the builder, had little time for such rhetoric, although he certainly regarded the primary task of art—at least after the October Revolution of 1917—as the visual reconstruction of reality parallel to the transformation of economic and social structures. The consequent interest in design, scientific analysis of art, rejection of ornamentation and utilitarianism led directly to the establishment of Constructivism in Russia in 1921.

Compare this with two labels titled "Suprematism" and "Constructivism" from our layman-oriented series:

> Malevich is often given credit for the first purely geometric painting—a black square on a white background. On a visit to Paris in 1912, he had seen cubist works which broke real objects into plane surfaces. When he went back to Russia, Malevich carried this idea one step further by doing away with the real object completely. His work was known as "suprematism" because it made form its main concern: form ruled "supreme."
>
> In 1913, Tatlin made the first non-objective sculptures. As the term "non-objective" suggests, these works did not try to imitate real objects. Tatlin and his friends Lissitzky and Rodchenko thought of the artist as a worker/engineer and viewed art as a useful product. Unlike Malevich, who favored "art for art's sake," they believed art could be a force for social change and that it would play a major role in the "brave new world" that would be built after the Russian revolution. They found uses for their new geometric style in many practical fields of design.

I think there can be little doubt about which of these excerpts from the two sets of labels communicates its information better or which has been prepared by a writing specialist.[12]

Finally, effective communication with a wide museum audience demands an aggressive policy of evaluation. We must set up economical evaluation techniques to pinpoint our successes and failures. We must learn to pretest

our label and brochure texts, as well as to test their final effectiveness. We must be able and willing to improve them by revision.

Obviously, we do not need to reinvent the wheel in order to improve our road record: many sources wait to be tapped. We do need to look carefully at where we have been and where we seem to be going, and we need to admit to ourselves that we have a lot to learn. We must be prepared to give up some of our comfortable habits — our conventional ways of thinking about our audience and our subject. We must be willing to commit some of our already overextended resources to audience research, to the development of communication models and to the continued evaluation of our performance. Above all, we have to decide whether we can afford to continue a laissez-faire policy or whether we want to begin a serious campaign of *product* development that can give meaning to our latest battle cry, "audience development." Δ

**Notes**

1. In an article adapted from an address delivered March 5, 1981, to the Education Session of the Texas Association of Museums, art education specialist Laura H. Chapman finds this cliché still alive and flourishing among museum professionals. Her reply: "Objects speak (if at all) to those who have been educated to decipher her message." "The Future and Museum Education," *Museum News* 60, no. 6 (July/August 1982):48.

2. It came as a shock to most of the Denver Art Museum staff to discover that 31 percent of the adult museum visitors had only a high school education. Another 8 percent had not graduated from high school, and 1 percent indicated eighth grade as the highest grade completed. Perhaps even more significant was the finding that another 23 percent had only "some" college experience. "Images of Denver's Civic and Cultural Institutions" (Denver: Research Services, Inc. [May 1982]), p. 5.

3. In a pioneering study of audience preferences for types of art historical information, Daryl Fischer found that even highly motivated volunteer respondents confessed some unfamiliarity with art historical terms or concepts used in the lectures they had attended. Although 63 percent were college graduates and more than half of this group had a master's degree or equivalent, 28 percent of the sample admitted there were "one or two" terms or concepts mentioned but not clearly defined, and 4 percent recalled "several" unclear terms. Fischer's study, done in conjunction with the Denver Art Museum's exhibition *Old Master Paintings from the Collection of Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza* (1981), focuses on the informational preferences of program audiences and should not be considered representative of exhibition audiences: a 1982 survey of adult Denver Art Museum visitors revealed that 40 percent had a high school education or less (see n. 2 above). Nonetheless, the Fischer report ("New Data from Old Masters: An Audience and Its Interests," *Museum Studies Journal* 3 [May 1984]) is an important model for the kind of audience analyses I advocate here.

4. Most of the recent authorities I have consulted on this subject agree either implicitly or explicitly with Carol Berkenkotter: "Small wonder that researchers have found students to be topic bound. School writing stifles the development of audience representation because it precludes its necessity." "Understanding a Writer's Awareness of Audience," *College Composition and Communication* 32 (December 1981): 396.

5. From his vantage point as director of marketing and public relations for the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village and chairman of the AAM's Committee on Public Relations and Communications, G. Donald Adams warns museum directors against viewing aggressive marketing "as a panacea." He argues that "marketing must begin with a good product" and adds that "it takes a thorough evaluation of your programs, an assessment of whether they are marketable." Quoted by Alan Rosenthal in "Museums Jump into the Marketing Game," *Advertising Age* 53, no. 41 (September 27, 1982): M2.

6. The absence of audience awareness in student writing has recently received serious attention from researchers and theorists. Carol Berkenkotter, for example, describes three pedagogical strategies that have been proposed to help writers develop a sense of audience. "Understanding a Writer's Awareness of Audience," pp. 396–97.

7. After a year of intensive efforts to improve label effectiveness, we have moved from the relatively simple main objective of the *Constructivism* labels (to get people to see some *art* in geometric art) to more sophisticated and subtle attitudinal goals. The Denver Art Museum's most recent label project aims at increasing visitor awareness of the role played by personal preconceptions in the esthetic experience. Although the labels do not use the term "stock response," they explicitly point out that emotional reactions to the subject matter of Western American art explain much of that art's appeal. By implication, and *only* by implication, they suggest that emotional biases influence all esthetic responses and that these biases should not go unexamined. José Aguayo, an intern in the Education Department, has undertaken the difficult task of measuring the audience's grasp of this concept and devising a way to determine whether or not understanding of the concept changes the audience's approach to art in any way.

8. Minda Borun and Maryanne Miller, "To Label or Not to Label?" *Museum News* 58, no. 2 (March/April 1980): 64–67. An excellent article by Harris H. Shettel marked a turning point in my own thinking on the issue of museum communication. "Exhibits: Art Form or Educational Medium?" *Museum News* 51 (September 1973): 32–41. Based on a speech he delivered to staff members of the Smithsonian Institution in May 1973, the article discusses the research he carried out to measure the effectiveness of two exhibits, *Atoms in Action* and *The Vision of Man.* His methodology and his findings are exemplary. I am indebted to Patterson B. Williams, director of education at the Denver Art Museum, for first bringing my attention to the issue of museum communication and a convincing bibliography.

9. William J. Vande Kopple, "Functional Sentence Perspective, Composition, and Reading," *College Composition and Communication* 33 (February 1983): 50–63.

10. Bonnie J. F. Meyer, "Reading Research and the Composition Teacher: The Importance of Plans," *College Composition and Communication* 33 (February 1983): 37–49.

11. I am not suggesting a writing specialist who has no knowledge of art history or a writer who is more interested in self-expression than in communication.

12. Our failure to consider audience has an insidious, crippling influence on our ability to communicate well. A more extended comparison of the two label sets reveals crucial differences in their continuity and cumulative effect. "Reading accessibility" involves far more than reading level measured in terms of language and syntax.

# A Spring Quintet

## Five Washington Area Exhibits You Won't Want to Miss

MELINDA YOUNG FRYE

### Search for Common Ground: Alexandria Archeology

Chances are you've read about the Torpedo Factory in Alexandria, Virginia, a widely advertised and highly successful civic project that turned an old munitions plant into studio and gallery space for more than 200 artists and craftspeople. But chances are you have *not* heard about another city of Alexandria project, now 10 years old and newly occupying spacious quarters in the Torpedo Factory — the Archeology Research Center.

On the second floor, at number 227, *Alexandria Archeology* is an exhibition, a laboratory and a project center for a rare activity. Claiming to be the first urban archeology project in the country, the center and its work are under the direction of Pamela Cressey.

A bright-red, iron circular stairway leads up to mezzanine offices, while the open, naturally lighted gallery is exposed to the Torpedo Factory (as are all the artists' studios) by two glass walls. These transparent perimeters have been used to mount a small but fascinating exhibition explaining urban archeology. Entitled *Search for Common Ground,* it shows handsome early ceramics and other reclaimed artifacts dug up from wells, privies and local sites over a period of several decades.

The exhibition is mounted on brightly painted red, green and gray platforms and plinths, with plexiglass boxes enclosing artifacts. Using the topics of preservation, research and community archeology, the exhibit carries the message that urban archeology seeks to protect the historic landscape and buried treasure, study selected areas and integrate the historic with the modern to enrich the present and the future. Color photographs illustrate and explain the investigatory and recovery work going on.

***High school visitors to the Alexandria Archeology project***

The laboratory-center is open to the public only on Fridays and Saturdays at present, when staff and volunteers themselves become part of the exhibit as they clean, number and research artifacts and discuss their work with visitors. Visitors can view the exhibit portion from the Torpedo Factory's interior even when the center is closed because displays are labeled on both sides of the cases.

Getting across the "message" of urban archeology is a key component of this exhibit, for although Alexandria seems to have an unusually large support group in the community for such an undertaking, the need to keep the *raison d'être* ever before the public is critical. The historic research process to determine occupants of dig sites, former lot boundaries, tax values and documented family possessions often takes years. Then there is the recovery of artifacts, their comparison and analysis. "Final site interpretation brings together the documentary and artifactual information with oral histories to complete the process," explains one exhibit label.

From sites such as Gadsby's Tavern, a doctor's office and a coppersmith's shop, as well as private dwellings, we see iron and wood sections, 18th-century mugs, bottles, pots and plates in warm shades of cream, green, black and ochre, along with occupational tools, transferware and stoneware ceramics. The most interesting object on view is a huge reconstructed-from-sherds stoneware storage jar with blue hand-applied decoration and the mark of "B. C. Milburn," an Alexandria potter who worked (research confirms) between 1841 and 1877. A photocopy of Milburn's 19th-century advertisement gives prices on his many wares—a 4-gallon jar like this one originally cost a mere $8.

The center is a model operation, in my view, because it presents a little-known history museum activity in a highly visible public space that is both

**Search for Common Ground: Alexandria Archeology.** Through March 1985. The Torpedo Factory, 105 North Union Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314. Friday-Saturday 11-5, other hours by special arrangement. (703) 834-4980. No charge. (Metrorail: King Street Station in Alexandria, transfer to Metrobus 28A or 28B)

MELINDA YOUNG FRYE has organized numerous exhibitions, taught courses in museum studies and conducted architectural surveys in the San Francisco Bay area. She now lives and consults in Washington, D.C.

"cultural" and "commercial." Artists' works are for sale on all sides, and, thanks to the advertising of the Torpedo Factory, tourists from around the world fill these walkways daily. The center's design plan, the exhibition of active research and preparation functions along with didactic displays, and the addition of the city's historic resources offices combine to offer the visitor a total concept, not just the isolated relics of a few digs.

Urban archeology is now going on elsewhere in the country. I hope other programs will find headquarters as ideal as those Alexandria has made possible in its *Search for Common Ground.*

## Country of Origin, USA: A Decade of Contemporary Rugs

*The muted colors and bold design of* New Mexican Sunset, 1982, *by Irene Yesley, are reminiscent of the New Mexican landscape where the weaver lives.*

Seven diverse cultural institutions in the Northwest Washington Dupont-Kalorama neighborhood have recently formed a consortium to share ideas and work together to attract visitors to their excellent "off the Mall" resources. Located in an elegant area of embassies, fine residential architecture and good restaurants, the Phillips Collection is perhaps the best known of the lot, but the Columbia Historical Society, the Fondo Del Sol Art and Media Center, the Barney House Studio, the Anderson House, the Woodrow Wilson House and the Textile Museum all deserve much more attention than they have received in the past.

**Country of Origin, USA: A Decade of Contemporary Rugs.** March 10-August 12. Textile Museum, 2320 S Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20008. (202) 667-0441. Tuesday-Saturday 10-5, Sunday 1-5. Closed Mondays and holidays. Donation at door: $2 adults, 50 cents children. (Metrorail: Dupont Circle Station)

The Textile Museum, housed in two handsome early 20th-century brick houses, is currently offering a special exhibit of contemporary rugs by American makers, in addition to its extended exhibits and a fine library and shop.

Ascending the stairway to the second-floor gallery where *Country of Origin, USA* is installed, the visitor passes beneath a float of printed cotton that suggests the artistry, beauty and whimsy that is to follow. *Flying Carpet I* by Jo Ann Gïordano is a rug-inspired design meant to hang on a wall or ceiling. Its Tibetan images belie an American origin and extend to the fringe, which is composed of rows of human finger shapes.

Continuing up the stairs one finds two spacious, dramatically lit rooms

hung with 40 small- to medium-sized rugs, all created by American artists within the past decade. As curator Rebecca Stevens tells us in her labels, the exhibition focuses on the work of sophisticated artists who design and make rugs based on a personal esthetic rather than on native American or folk traditions. Nevertheless, the techniques, forms and colors of these rugs more often than not take inspiration from the traditional and are only rarely so "off the wall" as to be outrageous mixed media productions.

Perhaps the best of the latter is *Raz-Ma-Taz,* an irregularly shaped mixture of various depths and patterns of hooking techniques including loops, bowties, ridges and waves. The juxtaposition of brilliant colors and synthetic fabrics adds even greater surprise.

Other unexpected works include several diverse, nonrectangular forms that use unfamiliar materials and a piece that is a kind of woven bocci-ball game in which various sized soft red spheres rest upon a black and white ground.

Most rugs in this handsome show, however, are roundish or rectangular, employ various familiar methods (hooking, felting, weft weaving, warp-faced weaving, tapestry, block weaving, braiding or painting) and exhibit nonelectric colors. In fact, a subtle progression and interplay of soft, or bold, hand-dyed wool colors is the overriding impression one has of the displayed works.

The labels indicate that the artists are interested in adapting old techniques to contemporary needs and that the dialogue between a rug and the room it is in is paramount. According to artist Dorothy Eckmann, "A rug exists in a room and becomes part of the room's environment."

The school of craft this show examines was influenced by the 1968 publication of Peter Collingwood's *Techniques of Rug Weaving.* Most rug makers today have certain successful designs in limited production, while the independent rug maker relies on craft fairs to merchandise one-of-a-kind pieces.

Other unusual examples in the show include floorcloths, the early 19th-century's affordable alternative to expensive rugs. These are pieces of canvas,

painted (usually with geometric and figurative stencils) and heavily varnished. *Object of Mystery,* a weft-faced wool and linen weave by Ed Oppenheimer, illustrates the artist's interest in "a mathematical description of natural forms." Accordingly, he uses a computer for his preliminary design information. Some of the more traditional hooked rugs, such as Linda Eyerman's *Rat Rug II,* tell a pictorial story.

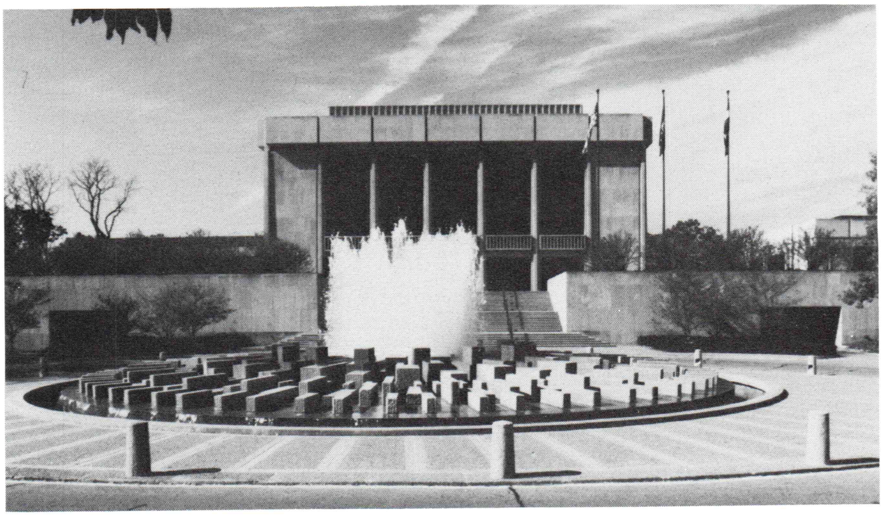
Supported by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, Best Products and anonymous donors, this show has been the impetus for a series of lectures, workshops and artist-in-residence demonstrations.

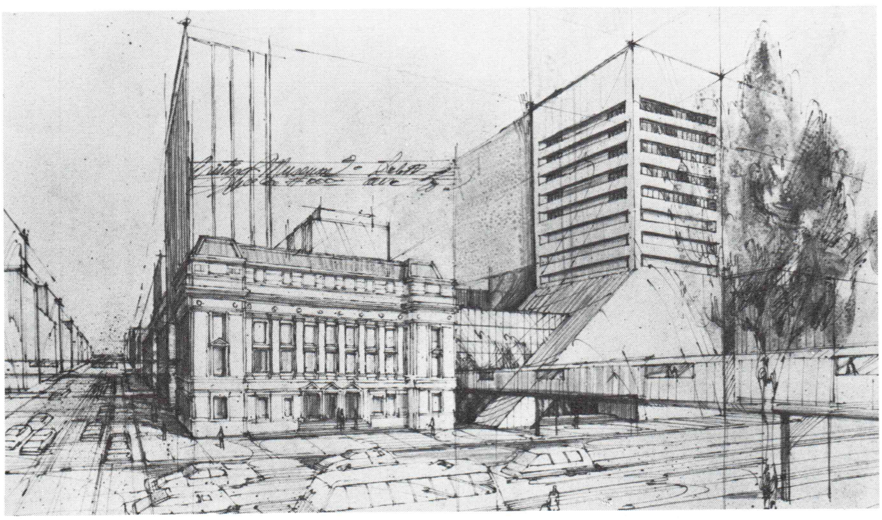
## M*A*S*H: Binding up the Wounds

*M*A*S*H is as great a hit in the galleries as it was on TV.*

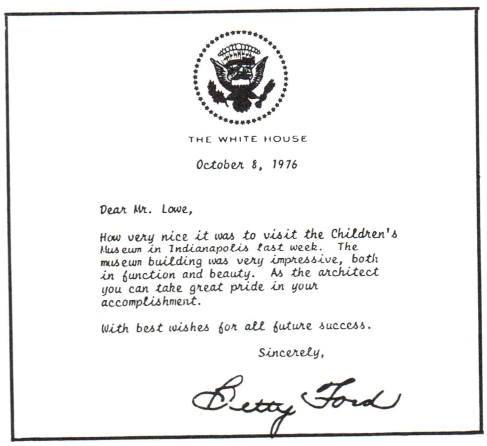
On the busiest days, hundreds of people, mostly families and groups of teenagers, snake slowly forward in a long line for the chance to file reverently past the interpretive introduction to *M*A*S*H: Binding up the Wounds.* They are strangely somber as they approach the exhibit about one of the greatest TV comedies of all time. But their seriousness matches the respectful presentation of this subject at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, where the exhibit compares and contrasts the experiences of real MASH units in Korea and Vietnam with images of Radar, Hot Lips, Hawkeye and the gang. The exhibit, which runs through September 30, 1984, is located on the museum's second floor in the west corridor and is a joint production of three divisions—Medical Sciences, Community Life and Military History. Twentieth-Century-Fox Film Corporation provided a grant for the show, as well as donating to the Smithsonian's entertainment collections the M*A*S*H sets for the "O.R." and "The Swamp,"

**M*A*S*H: Binding up the Wounds.** Through September 30. National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20560. (202) 357-2987. Daily 10-7:30. No charge. (Metrorail: Smithsonian Station)









THE WHITE HOUSE

October 8, 1976

Dear Mr. Lowe,

How very nice it was to visit the Children's Museum in Indianapolis last week. The museum building was very impressive, both in function and beauty. As the architect you can take great pride in your accomplishment.

With best wishes for all future success.

Sincerely,

Betty Ford

and a generous number of props including signs, costumes, scripts, fan mail and entertainment awards.

A linear, wall-mounted photo-essay introduces the show to the visitor and juxtaposes the activities of real MASH units (these photos are in newsworthy black and white) with similar scenes from the TV show (these in TV-like color). Such subjects as medical "evac," O.R.'s, mess halls, surgeons, nurses, company clerks and washday are portrayed in small photo groups with comparative labels.

As viewers turn the corner they are face-to-face with the stage set of the "O.R.," which was slightly shortened to fit into the available exhibit space. There are three operating tables instead of four, and one notices the foam rubber padding (nonauthentic, but a kindness to the actor-victims who spent long hours "under the knife" during tapings). In the corner are the oil-drum stove and the ancient refrigerator; huge klieg lights hang down as a reminder that we are looking at a stage set, but most visitors ignore them. The scene speaks more strongly of surgery than of entertainment.

A few more steps to the left, however, and the younger viewers exclaim, "Which corner was Frank in?" "Hawkeye was in the far right," "There are Winchester's albums and Hawkeye's still!" "Hey, the Swamp was a lot *bigger* than that!" And the most telling comment of all — "Is this the *real thing* from TV?"

Real and pretend blend interestingly in this presentation, with sometimes confusing results. "Real" was medical personnel in the Far East during wartime; "real" was also Alan Alda and his pals on a Hollywood soundstage. Because the producers of the TV series made a strong effort to be authentic in their re-creation of the war scene, the medical props, military costumes and layout of tents were as true-to-life as possible. Many of the medical and military items actually date from the 1950s and were used on the set for the 11 years that the TV show was produced. Only large bottles of Max Factor's Theatrical Blood were modern substitutions.

In a closing section, the exhibit interprets selected objects as entertainment history. The most interesting piece here is not Klinger's gold-lamé dress but the photos of Captain Pierce and his predecessor and creator, H. Richard Hornberger. The doctor, who had served in 8055th MASH unit and, like his character, hailed from Crabapple Cove, Maine, wrote the original novel in 1968. His main character was autobiographical and politically conservative in contrast to the antimilitary, liberal role made famous by Alda. Larry Gelbart, who wrote the first five years of scripts for the TV series, won an Emmy award for stories that started out as operating room drama and ended up as tragi-comedy characterized by a "chronic bawdiness and sex-centered wisecracks."

M*A*S*H has been called a powerful icon of popular culture, and, as such, it may cause some confusion in the eye of the exhibit viewer. Is this exhibit about the TV show, the film, the book, the war in Korea or the war in Vietnam? Actually, it is about all of those things and more. The explanations and interrelationships are there for those who read the labels, and many do.

In fact, people *read* in this show as never before, and it is because, in my view, they *care* about the people they grew to love on the series. That love brings them to the exhibit with a desire for more information, and, in the process, they learn a lot about developing medical technology in the field, the personalities and production of a hugely successful television program, and are subtly encouraged to examine their own feelings about war and peace.

A MASH sales shop is separately constructed in the entry foyer to resemble the "Supply Tent." While the goods therein (sweat shirts, patches, books and posters) are attractive and in keeping with the exhibit, the location of the shop is unsuccessful, as it confronts the visitor fresh from the Mall and before the exhibit has been seen. It would have been more appropriately placed around the corner near the exhibit's end.

A 31-page catalog contains essays on all the exhibit's themes, explains the Smithsonian's interest in collecting this material and includes color pictures of all our old friends.

## National Museum of American Art

*The third floor galleries of the National Museum of American Art house New Deal paintings and sculpture—"wonderful flat planes of color in buildings, machinery, smokestacks and faces."*

In its first major reinstallation since the museum's opening in 1968, the National Museum of American Art (NMAA) has completely rehung the collection on all three floors. This permits a more chronological arrangement than has been possible over the past 16 years. The reinstallation will be complete by June; for the purposes of this review, Val Lewton, chief designer, has sketched in many details.

Those unfamiliar with Washington's art museums sometimes wonder at first how this institution differs from the National Gallery of Art. In brief, the latter institution focuses on world art, while the NMAA collects, exhibits and studies the American product. Actually among the earliest of the Smithsonian's collections, it began in 1829 as a private assemblage and was transferred to the institution in 1858. Originally called the National Collection of Fine Arts, the NMAA exhibited in a variety of locations through the years until in 1968 it moved into the refurbished Old Patent Office Building (1840-67). By 1980 the museum had changed its name to NMAA, and, in conjunction with the present redo, it has updated its logo as well.

Exhibit plans call for early 19th-century art, prints and drawings, and portraits by famous artists on the first floor. A special gallery will house Western art including works by Catlin and John Mix Stanley. The second level will house mid- and late-19th century works, including paintings by Homer, Ryder, Inness and others. A special section on the so-called American Renaissance at the turn of the 20th century will be mounted, and Hiram Powers' impressive figurative sculptures will return to their familiar private gallery.

Up on the third floor, 20th-century works will predominate, and I examined a group of New Deal paintings and sculpture — wonderful flat planes of color in buildings, machinery, smokestacks and faces. Paul Manship's stylish and powerful designs for architecture and public spaces (he did *Prometheus* in New York's Rockefeller Center Plaza) have their own area.

Perhaps most impressive of all is the new Lincoln Gallery, the block-long high-ceilinged Greek Revival space on the east end of the third floor. This vaulted room, which for years housed, in its cramped dark cases, the Patent Office's collections of models submitted by inventors, is now open and painted in whites and grays. The ar-

**National Museum of American Art.**
Ongoing. Old Patent Office Building, 8th and G Streets, NW, Washington, D.C. 20560. (202) 357-2987. Daily 10-5:30. No charge. (Metrorail: Gallery Place Station)

chitecture of the room is a perfect setting for the tall Rickey sculptures and other contemporary works.

One major gallery on the building's west side will be given over to a monumental, but temporary, gathering of paintings by Erastus Salisbury Field, an important 19th-century New England artist. Cosponsored by the adjoining National Portrait Gallery, this is a loan exhibition from the Museum of Fine Arts in Springfield, Massachusetts.

The museum's new installation is defined and unified by new color schemes throughout (pale blues and greens on the first floor, dusty light and dark roses on the second). These flatter the gray granite pile that is the Old Patent Office Building.

Typical of the American works featured at this museum are the genre paintings seen in the main corridor gallery on the first floor. Here both urban and rural pursuits characteristic of national life in the years before the Civil War are portrayed with careful attention to realistic detail as well as to romantic imagery. S. F. B. Morse's drawing room portrait of Mrs. Richard Cary Morse and her children and James Hamilton's rustic scene of Rip Van Winkle beside the Hudson River are but two examples.

I predict the visiting public will, as I have in this overview, react to the entire National Museum of American Art as an exhibit and as a superb place to view, understand and appreciate the continuum of America's artistic production from the earliest formalistic styles to the latest abstract creations. Based on what I saw and a knowledge of proposed plans, I'm willing to bet that the "new" NMAA will be one of the great shows around in June.



## HERPlab

Out at the National Zoological Park, located right in the middle of the Reptile House, is a friendly and dynamic room that is noisy in contrast to the quiet, slow-moving characters in the glass-fronted exhibit cases nearby. HERPlab is a learning exhibit, an interactive "discovery room," now about a year old and inspired by the "hands-on" experimental programs of downtown natural history museums. It derives its name from herpetology, the study of reptiles and amphibians.

Designed for kids from 6 to 106, HERPlab is entered through imposing (but not frightening) bronze double doors that date from the Reptile House's original construction and feature medallions of dinosaurs. A large skull of *Triceratops elatus* in one of the two storefront windows that flank the main doors reminds visitors that dinosaurs were reptiles which once ruled the earth. The other window houses a moving (sometimes) turtle.

At HERPlab you can't exactly get your hands on the artifacts. "Too traumatic for the animals," the agreeable, well-informed staffer tells you, and you realize immediately that she is right. What you can do is *observe* a frog (big, green, African bull variety), a nonpoisonous and beautifully marked American corn snake or a gecko lizard in clear plastic temporary holding boxes in the middle of comfortable round tables. Family groups, the targeted audience for this exhibit, can gather on all sides. Everyone can see at once, and with the help of a packet of well-designed question cards found under the box, mutual discovery can begin.

The touching that is a natural desire in this environment is made possible with the discarded skins of snakes and the tanned hide of an alligator. Visitors may also take "activity boxes," covering topics such as "Turtle Bones," "Venomous Snakes" and "Eggs," from a shelf to the table for handling, games and further discoveries. One corner of the

**HERPlab.** Ongoing. Reptile House, National Zoological Park, 3001 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20008. (202) 673-4800. Wednesday-Sunday 12-3. No charge. (Metrorail: Woodley Park/Zoo Station)

*Visitors to the HERPlab may handle specimens from "activity boxes."*

room has a small film unit for individual or small group viewing of short programs, while another has a working lab with sink and microscope shelf. Here certain tiny bones and skin samples are revealed. In still another, a comfortable bench and three-shelf library of children's books on related animal subjects encourage further discussion and study.

Skeletons are a big part of the learning story here. They are mounted in plexiglass cases in one area, treated by an activity box ("Skullduggery") and seen in closeup in the lab corner.

The exhibit is unique in its success in demystifying the behind-the-scenes work of a zoo. One wall contains a photo-exhibit called "Reptile Keepers," showing these professionals at work as they scrub down a giant tortoise, prepare food (a "zoo salad") and weigh a boa constrictor (very carefully, in a cotton bag). Large glass doors on either side of the room give views into the work area behind the animal enclosures and show the keepers' domain — desks, equipment, tools. A nearby label explains what one sees there, including the heating and cooling system and why it's important to control the temperature in the lab.

HERPlab volunteers greet you with a smile and a laminated card outlining your discovery options. The volunteers keep an eye on the safety of the animals, check out activities, suggest, explain and keep the place humming. On the Thursday afternoon I was there it had a capacity crowd. I'm told that the average stay of family visitors is half an hour— unusually long for any one museum activity or exhibit. I can believe it. Even without gathering notes for this review, I would have stayed that long myself.

And yes, I did automatically wander with much greater interest, understanding and enjoyment through the rest of the Reptile House before taking my leave.

The HERPlab exhibit, funded by the National Science Foundation, has sparked similar programs elsewhere.

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The result of this dogged activity is an archival collection of nationally distributed print ads gleaned from magazines and daily newspapers. These ads cover more than three hundred and fifty consumer product and service categories. Each one of which is as current as yesterday and most of which are detailed back through the turn of the century...some as far back as the eighteen seventies. As for volume, the files contain over three million individual ads of which one million are estimated to be unduplicated.

Five years ago the archive was purchased by a midwestern advertising executive whose goal was to compile, package and sell the information contained in the files. Unfortunately for the executive he committed one greivous error...he became involved in the expansion of the files and began to treat them as a hobby rather than as a commercial venture. Accordingly, he lost the amount of money necessary to bring him to the realization that the hobby had become diabolically time and money consuming.

So, the files are for sale...for a fraction of their actual value. The purpose of the reduced price is to ensure that the archive stays intact. Packaging and selling the archive in parts would be an unmitigated abuse of the hundreds of thousands of manhours expended to compile it.

The price of the archive is in the middle six figures and terms can be arranged. For further information and to schedule an appointment to view the files, please call (312) 736-5005. Ask for Ms. Rivera.

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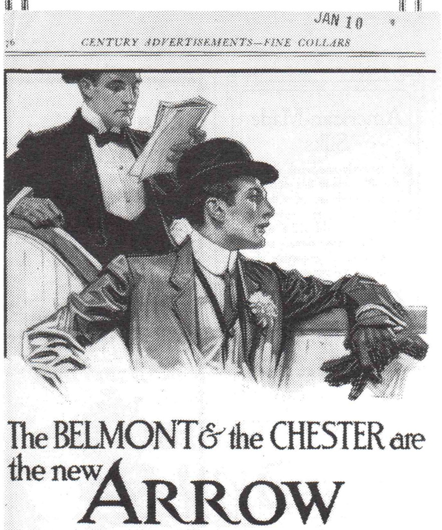
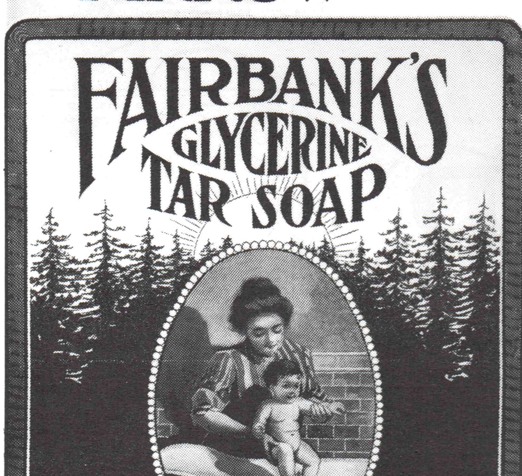





EXHIBITS

# Also on View

*This month, in honor of the annual meeting in Washington,* Also on View *provides a quick look at several exhibitions currently on view in the capital city. For future* Also on View *columns, we would appreciate receiving information on current or upcoming exhibitions that your institution is hosting or sponsoring. Send your press releases to* Also on View, *AAM, 1055 Thomas Jefferson Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20007.*

**Pierre Bonnard: The Late Paintings** opens at the Phillips Collection on June 9. This is the first exhibition of Pierre Bonnard's paintings to feature the latter portion of the artist's career — from roughly World War I up to his death in 1947. Too long associated with the orientally influenced, richly patterned paintings of his early Nabi period, Bonnard's art derived from a variety of sources: ancient and contemporary, imaginative and domestic. The 70 paintings in this exhibition—still lifes, landscapes, nudes and self-portraits — are assembled (many for the first time) from European and American collections, as well as the permanent collections of the Musée National d'Arte Moderne and the Phillips Collection, which contains the largest collection of late Bonnard paintings.

More like Proust than any visual artist of his day, Bonnard isolated time in space and pressed beyond the physical limitations of canvas and paint to the metaphysical — through sensory perception and free association (the glimpse of a woman's thigh as she emerged from the bathtub). His late works draw from ancient sculpture, symbolist painting and contemporaries such as Renoir and Matisse to create a new mode of poetic expressionism. Increased scale, a new freedom of handling, distorted perspectives and drawing, and a bold new use of color all combine in Bonnard's highly subjective chromatic visions.

*Pierre Bonnard,* **L'Homme et la Femme,** *c. 1900*

After leaving the Phillips Collection on August 25, 1984, the exhibition will travel to the Dallas Museum of Art (September 16-November 11, 1984).

The Phillips Collection is located at 1600 21st Street, NW.

*James J. ("Jimmy") Doolittle, who in 1931 became the first person to fly across the country in less than 12 hours, is featured in* **Golden Age of Flight.**

Last fall, the National Air and Space Museum sponsored a juried competition, asking young artists to depict the romance, daring and glamour of aviation between 1919 and 1939. The 30 winning entries are on view in the museum's west gallery in an exhibition called **Golden Age of Flight.**

Winners include paintings with titles like *Jimmie Mattern's Lockheed 12A, 1937; Picnic with the Travel Air, 1926;* and *Scaring the Cows: Boeing F4B-4s, 1932.* The 30 works surround a bright yellow Northrop N-1M flying wing, an experimental craft that epitomizes the technological developments of the "golden age" in aviation history.

The exhibition opened in April in conjunction with a new gallery of the same name. The "Golden Age of Flight" gallery at the Air and Space Museum highlights aviation's adventurous period between the two world wars, when names like Amelia Earhart, Jimmy Doolittle, Charles Lindbergh and Howard Hughes made the headlines.

Visitors to the gallery can relive those years through newspaper clips, magazine covers, posters, movie stills, newsreel footage and a film narrated by Lt. Gen. Jimmy Doolittle and created especially for the museum.

Five aircraft are on exhibit: the Wittman *Buster,* an airplane that enjoyed perhaps the longest and most successful career in air-racing history; a Beechcraft Staggerwing, a popular luxury private and business aircraft; the Curtiss Robin *Ole Miss,* in which the Key brothers set a world record for sustained flight in 1935 (nearly 27 days aloft); the Northrop Gamma *Polar Star,* in which Lincoln

Ellsworth made the first trans-Antarctic flight in 1935; and a reproduction of the Gee Bee Z, a distinctive aircraft of radical design typical of 1930s air racing.

The National Air and Space Museum is located on Independence Avenue between 4th and 7th Streets, SW, on the Mall.

**Harvey K. Littleton: Glass Sculpture and Ceramics** at the Renwick Gallery (of the National Museum of American Art) is an exhibition of 108 objects that traces Littleton's evolution from studio potter to internationally respected glass artist.

As an artist, teacher and master technician, Littleton is widely recognized as a pioneer of the American modern studio glass movement. Prior to 1962, glass art was produced in factories to the specifications of designers or by a few individual artists who used techniques that did not require glass blowing. Littleton and glass blower Dominick Labino introduced the possibility of artists working directly with molten glass in their studios, which led to the training of hundreds of glass-blowing artists at universities and art schools.

Littleton's first one-man exhibition of glass works, at the Art Institute of Chicago in 1963, contained only utilitarian forms, but he soon began creating works that denied function. In the late 1960s he began to make his famous "gravity loops" — blown columns swung overhead and bent of their own weight as they cooled. In recent years Littleton's works have become larger, more complex and colorful.

The exhibition was organized by the High Museum of Art, whose director, Gudmund Vigtel, served as curator.

The Renwick Gallery is on Pennsylvania Avenue at 17th Street, NW, near the Farragut metro stops.

**Lighthouse of the Sky,** at the Navy Memorial Museum through July 2, tells the history of the U.S. Naval Observatory in Washington, from its establishment in 1844 to 1893, when the site moved to its present location on Massachusetts Avenue.

When the observatory opened in 1844, President John Quincy Adams realized a lifelong dream and the young nation proclaimed scientific independence from Europe. During the post-Civil War years, the observatory became one of the world's leading astronomical laboratories. The exhibition includes 19th-century lithographs and photographs of naval officers associated with the early observatory, as well as views of the observatory itself as it expanded in size and function. A special viewer offers a dozen stereographic views of the observatory. Books containing the results of scientific work conducted at the site are on view, along with scientific equipment — a transit instrument, a chronometer and a five-inch telescope.

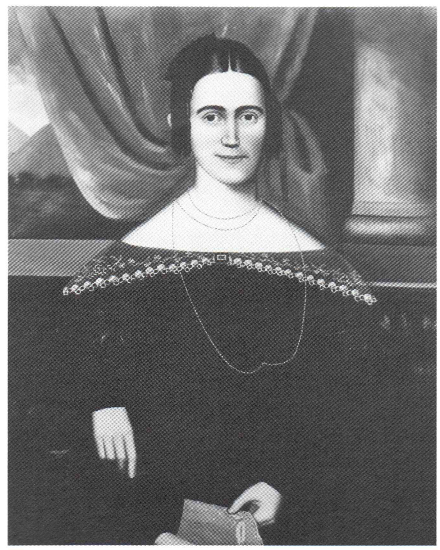
The exhibit is a joint presentation of the National Academy of Sciences, Columbia Historical Society, Naval Medical Command and the U.S. Naval Observatory.

The Navy Memorial Museum is located in the historic Washington Navy Yard, 9th and M Streets, SE, Building 76.

More than 100 works by the 19th-century American folk artist Erastus Salisbury Field are on view at the Na-

tional Portrait Gallery and the National Museum of American Art. **Erastus Salisbury Field, 1805-1900** is the first joint exhibition ever held at the two museums.

The quintessential American folk artist, Field traveled through New England as an itinerant portrait painter. The National Portrait Gallery exhibition contains 73 of Field's portraits from 1825 to the 1850s, including a powerful image of his grandmother, Elizabeth



***Erastus Field's portrait of Julia Ann Adams Peck***

Ashley — a somber painting except for the vivid red chair in which she is seated — and several portraits of children, painted for a bargain fee of $1 (Field's rate for adult portraits was $4). Also on display is the portrait masterpiece of Field's career, the Joseph Moore Family (1839). One of the landmarks of 19th-century American painting, it is a nearly life-sized group portrait showing the Moores in grand costume in their elegant parlor.

In the latter half of his life, Field concentrated on historical and visionary paintings. The National Museum of American Art exhibition includes 29 paintings and drawings of real and imaginary landscapes, biblical and mythical scenes, and patriotic subjects, some strongly colored by Field's fervent

abolitionistic opinions. A highlight of the show is the colossal 9 × 11 foot painting, *Historical Monument of the American Republic.* Executed in the final years of the Civil War and seen as the crowning achievement of Field's career, it depicts a huge structure of 10 towers that narrate the history of the Republic from the early settlement days to the post-Civil War period, comparing the plight of the slaves in the antebellum South with that of the Israelites under the pharaohs.

The exhibition was organized by guest curator Mary Black for the Museum of Fine Arts in Springfield, Massachusetts. After September 4 it will travel to the Museum of American Folk Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (October-November 1984) and then to the Marion Koogler McNay Art Institute in San Antonio, Texas (January-February 1985).

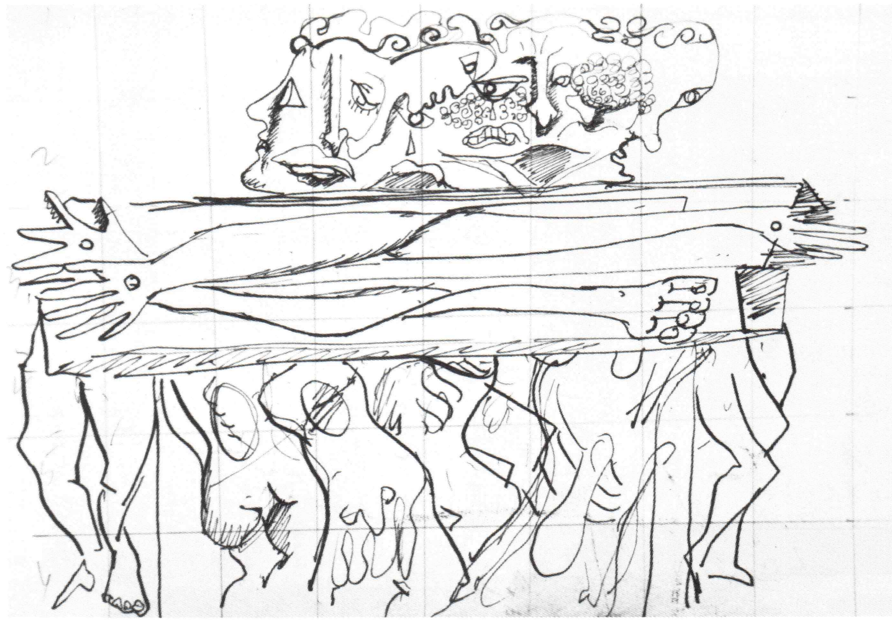
The National Portrait Gallery and the National Museum of American Art are located at Eighth and F Streets, NW, at the Gallery Place metro stop.

Also worth a look in this presidential election year is another exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery, **Time and the Presidency.** Presidential portraits commissioned for the covers of *Time* magazine are on view, revealing some surprising moods of the nation's highest office.

By no means formal portraits, these images are sometimes solemn, sometimes exuberant—always reflecting the issues and emotions of the moment. The collection captures presidents from John F. Kennedy to Ronald Reagan and includes the 1960 depiction of Kennedy surrounded by his family; Lyndon B. Johnson (November 1963) just after assuming office following Kennedy's assassination; Richard Nixon and Mao Tse-Tung (July 1971) just after Nixon announced his trip to China; and a 1976 portrait of Gerald Ford and his opponent for the Republican presidential nomination—Ronald Reagan.

*Time and the Presidency* remains on view through the 1985 presidential inauguration.

The National Gallery of Art hosts the premiere of **Mark Rothko: Works on Paper,** the first comprehensive exhibition of this major 20th-century American's works on paper. Eighty-six Rothko works, dating from the late 1920s to 1970 (the year of his death), are on view



*Mark Rothko,* **Untitled,** *early 1940s*

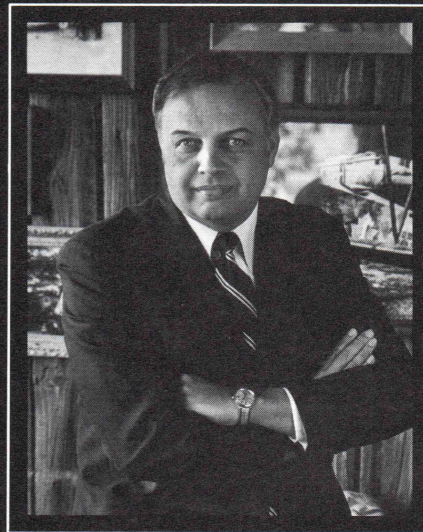
in the East Building through August 5.

Highlights of the exhibition include Rothko's generally unknown works from 1968 and 1969. In contrast to the somber hues of his late canvases, these works on paper radiate with the high-keyed pigments of the 1950s. The exhibition also explores works done in preparation for the artist's major commissions, including the Seagram murals in New York and the paintings for Rothko Chapel in Houston.

After its premiere at the National Gallery, the exhibition will travel to the Museum of Art, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh (November 3, 1984-January 6, 1985); the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (April 25-June 16, 1985); the Milwaukee Art Museum (November 17, 1985-January 12, 1986); the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon (February 9-April 6, 1986); the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (May 4-June 29, 1986); and the Saint Louis Art Museum (July 18-September 1, 1986).

*Mark Rothko: Works on Paper* has been coorganized by the American Federation of Arts and the Mark Rothko Foundation. The exhibition is made possible by a grant from Warner Communications Inc.

The National Gallery of Art East Building is at 4th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW, facing the Mall. Δ



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# The MAP Team

SUSAN GRAZIANO

Ah, the joys of being a consultant! The thrill of flying commuter airlines to strange lands . . . of having a pilot introduce himself as 'Captain Eddie' and joining him as he dusts three fields of soybeans on the way. There's nothing like a MAP appraisal in the land of the grassroots." Such was the impression of Museum Assessment Program (MAP) surveyor Patrick Foltz, executive director of the Montgomery County Historical Society in Dayton, Ohio, after returning from a MAP visit to the hinterlands. One never knows what to expect, what obstacles and adventures lie ahead, when undertaking a consulting visit for the program.

MAP is a general consultant service, offering practical assistance to help museums improve the quality of their operations and programs. It is funded by the Institute of Museum Services and administered by the American Association of Museums. The MAP consultancy helps the museum to review its progress and to set priorities for the future. It can serve as a catalyst for the work of the staff and board of trustees and as a tool for long-range planning. All nonprofit museums, regardless of discipline, size or financial resources, can participate in the program.

MAP requires the surveyor to make a one-day on-site visit to a museum and evaluate its overall operations. Not an easy task in an eight-hour day! Many more hours of thought and work are required to develop a "workable" report. Surveyor Foltz sees the report as having a dual purpose. "One of the challenges of MAP," Foltz comments, "is to prepare a document that treats both the general aspect of the operation and the specific concerns that prompted the organization to request the appraisal." The surveyor must find the delicate balance between the needs to be addressed — without overwhelming the institution — and what the staff and board would like to focus on in the report.

SUSAN GRAZIANO is assistant to the Museum Assessment Program coordinator at the AAM.

### A Commitment to the Profession

The consultants who offer their services for the visit are seasoned professionals. They give freely of their time and knowledge. Why? Perhaps it is the excitement of the unknown that piques MAP surveyors' interest. It certainly isn't the money — consultants receive only a small honorarium for their services, barely reflecting the commitment required.

Robert Stark, assistant director of the museum at the Oregon Historical Society, offers a more likely explanation for the willingness to serve. He is a MAP consultant because of a "commitment to the profession."

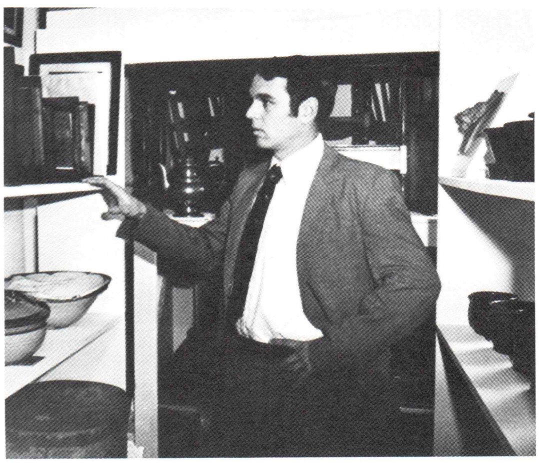
This spirit of volunteerism has been evident to the museum profession since the inception of the Museum Assessment Program in 1980. MAP depends heavily upon the services of the more than 350 museum professionals without whose support and generosity the program would cease to exist. The museums from which the surveyors come are fraught with their own troubles, yet the consultants serve again and again, coming to the rescue of their fellow colleagues and institutions.

James Koenig, director of the Renfrew Museum in Waynesboro, Pennsylvania, is an experienced MAP surveyor with his own ideas about why the professionals give of their time and expertise. Why has Koenig conducted so many appraisals — six at last count — for the program? "Why even one?" Koenig laughs.

> I suppose an ego that is susceptible to flattery is one reason for taking on another project when I have too many in hand. [But] even flattery wears thin once initial excitement melts into problems that seek solutions and work that must be completed. Flattery is only one piece of the puzzle that motivates.

*Robert Stark*

*James Koenig*



## IN-HOUSE

Recognition, according to Koenig, is another element.

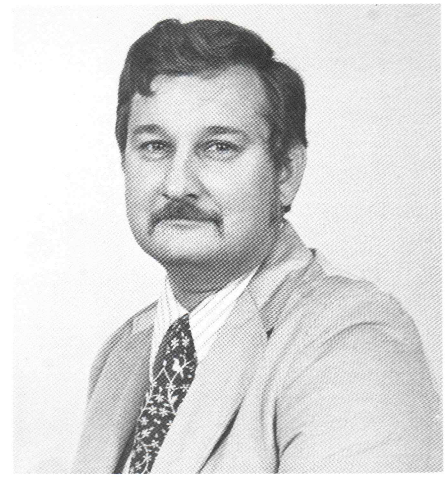
> Most of the time I am the unassuming manager of a local museum. Each new MAP project allows me to speak my opinion on matters of importance to a particular museum. I usually get the respect that eludes me at home. I speak, and people listen and nod, knowing that what I say has merit. The return home is difficult, and the hunger for recognition soon reemerges.

Koenig sincerely enjoys making MAP visits, and his reports reflect a sensitivity to human needs as well as institutional goals. The task is not easy. One must be critical of the situation, yet at the same time sympathetic to the human and monetary limitations.

Koenig has developed a working philosophy on how to approach each survey for optimal effect. First, Koenig makes a general assessment, then concentrates on the three or four areas that he feels need the most attention. He strives for accord with the museum on which areas the report will highlight and stresses the importance of working closely with the board in order to make the report a document in which the trustees will have confidence — and which they will follow.

Diana Johnson, associate director of the Country Music Foundation in Nashville, Tennessee, compares the consulting process to that of an attorney

*Diana Johnson*



*Ron Kley*

preparing a brief for a major legal case. "While I will have prepared to some extent for the on-site visit by absorbing as much material on the museum as I can, the visit is really the discovery and deposition core of my attempt to completely understand the organization."

Johnson tries to solicit information related to more than 125 areas of concern during the course of the eight-hour day. Then, she says, "I will take that raw information and spend the next two to three weeks deciphering it, reevaluating it and perhaps double-checking with the institution before I can comfortably reach any conclusions."

Each organization that applies to MAP for assistance receives an individualized approach. Rather than the "fine-tuning" a professional organization requires, some institutions staffed entirely by volunteers may require an evaluation "beginning from the ground up," says Ron Kley, registrar-curator of the Maine State Museum in Augusta. In these situations, Kley explains that he adopts the "Salvation Army Approach — first feed the hungry stomach and then try to communicate with the starving soul."

### The More You Give . . .

While MAP helps museums to improve themselves, it benefits the surveyor as well. One cannot help but learn from others' good fortunes — as well as their mistakes. Douglas Noble, director of the Pink Palace Museum in Memphis, explains his reasons for acting as a MAP surveyor simply: "It gives me personal satisfaction. Once I leave the bounds of my city I am considered an expert. It

also gives me an opportunity to visit other institutions." Noble continues, "I appreciate my own museum and put things in perspective. It is a learning experience for both the surveyor and the MAP museum."

Alvin Gerhardt, director of the Rocky Mount Historical Association in Piney Flats, Tennessee, follows the learning philosophy as well. "I never fail to learn something as well as teach something," he says.

By helping these institutions, Gerhardt feels he can repay the "dues" he owes to the profession. Gerhardt, who was among the first pioneers of MAP and served as a member of the first policy panel, prefers to assess the smaller museums. He explains that

*Douglas Noble*

*Alvin Gerhardt*

smaller museums, either all-volunteer organizations or those with beginning professionals on staff, often feel lost and put upon by the professionals. MAP has served as a major initiative in bringing museum people together on a one-to-one basis.

Certainly one person cannot solve another museum's problems — problems that have existed for years — in a one-day visit, but the survey can offer

## IN-HOUSE

creative unbiased solutions and strengthen the professional network.

The MAP surveyors may not have all the answers — but they probably have friends and colleagues to whom the museum could turn for further advice and technical assistance.

Alice Hemenway, historic site administrator of Pennsbury Manor in Morrisville, Pennsylvania, echoes Gerhardt's notion about paying dues. "When I first began in the museum profession," she says,

> there were a few individuals who were very good to me. As I cannot repay them directly, I have to find another way to show my appreciation. If I can turn around to younger peers, professionally speaking, and provide them with some of the gifts that were given to me, I'll repay those individuals who helped me by helping others.

Hemenway believes that those who can help have an obligation to aid small museums in collections maintenance.

### Continuing Relationships

The MAP program has been beneficial to more than 750 museums throughout the United States in the past four years. In some cases, a continuing relationship between the MAP museum and the surveyor has developed. Recently the AAM office was pleased to hear of a lasting collaboration between William Donaldson, president and executive director of the Philadelphia Zoological Garden, and a zoo that he visited a few years ago. Donaldson says that the two organizations have "developed a consortium of all the smaller zoos in the immediate area. Out of this group has evolved a system of regular meetings and workshops designed to improve the performance of these institutions."

*William Donaldson*

*Walter S. Dunn, Jr.*

Other surveyors indicate the pleasure they feel in seeing the success of a museum they have had the opportunity to consult. Walter S. Dunn, Jr., executive director of the Des Moines Center of Science and Industry, wrote the MAP office asking that it forgive his egotism as he related the success story of the museum he had recently visited. "I am quite proud of the progress that resulted from my visit," he wrote.

> A bill that would eventually provide $2 million annually in tax funds to support the operation has been introduced into the state legislature, with backing from a politically powerful county executive. The levy will need voter approval, but the last such request was passed. The future looks very bright for the museum. And I helped!

It is quite possible that many people would continue to counsel their colleagues in the museum world with or without the official existence of the Museum Assessment Program. But it is comforting to know that the advice and recommendations are backed by a program that is proving itself to be successful—and worthwhile.

# A User's Guide to MAP

### What MAP Is

The Museum Assessment Program (MAP) has been described as a general consultation service that "helps your museum be what you want it to be." Participating museums benefit by:

- Learning to set priorities and make better use of existing resources
- Establishing a foundation for long-range planning
- Strengthening their position with fund-raising agencies.

### How MAP Works

*Step 1:*
The museum sends in a brief application card along with a copy of its tax-exempt determination letter.

*Step 2:*
The museum completes a self-evaluation questionnaire and returns it to the MAP coordinator.

*Step 3:*
The museum completes an IMS/MAP grant application to cover the cost of program (see **Costs**).

*Step 4:*
Arrangements are made for a one-day, on-site evaluation of the museum by an experienced museum professional.

*Step 5:*
A written report, diagnosing strengths and weaknesses, is submitted to the museum, together with supplemental information about appropriate resources to help initiate improvements.

The entire process takes five to eight months.

### What MAP Isn't

- MAP is *not* a pass/fail evaluation or "mini-accreditation."
- MAP does *not* require extensive preparation — museums are invited to "come as they are."
- MAP is *not* time consuming.

### Costs

The cost of participation is low, ranging from $600 to $800. Most museums incur little or no costs because funding is readily available from the Institute of Museum Services.

### Additional Information

Want more information? Call Kim Igoe or Susan Graziano at (202) 338-5300. They'll be glad to answer your questions, send additional literature or provide you with a list of museums that have participated in MAP. Δ

# BOOKS

## Beauty and the Beasts: On Museums, Art, the Law, and the Market

Stephen E. Weil. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1983. 304 pp., hardbound $19.95, paper $9.95.

*Reviewed by Bruce H. Evans*

To assemble in a single, modest volume a compendium of articles and papers written over a period of a dozen years on a variety of subjects can be dangerous. Such a book could easily lack focus, display inconsistencies in style and thinking and end up being written off as self-aggrandizement. *Beauty and the Beasts,* however, is not a book to be written off. This collection of articles, speeches and reviews written by Stephen Weil spans one of the most turbulent and frustrating periods in the history of American museums (1971-83) and, quite simply, should be required reading, both for those of us who survived it as well as for those who will inherit the museums that it shaped.

The act of shaping something depends on pressure. This book is about pressures—the Beasts—that have been brought to bear on museums. The first essay, "The Multiple Crises in Our Museums," was delivered as the keynote address at the 48th Annual Meeting of the Western Association of Art Museums (WAAM) in Los Angeles in October 1971. Those who remember the confrontational spirit of the annual meeting of the AAM in New York just a year earlier can imagine the trepidation with which any speaker must have faced a California audience.

Weil is, however, neither any speaker nor any writer. As an erstwhile lawyer, whom "a surfeit of minutiae drove from its practice" into the museum world, Weil has a love of (and the ability to use) the English language found rarely even among the best of the bar. Though he looks back on this address with a wistful apologia ("... it seems all too clear that I was no more exempt from the millenarian passions of 1971 than museums are exempt from history. The *Zeit* had more of a *Geist* than I then suspected, but maybe every *Zeit* does."), his remarks were prophetic. The "multiple crises" of this period — financial, power and identity—have continued to plague museums into the 1980s. Throughout the rest of *Beauty and the Beasts,* Weil's writings point out the pressures that created these crises and probe the reactions to them within the sphere of museums.

"The collected works of" sort of books frequently are just that. They are often presented in chronological order and sometimes prefaced by remarks attempting to provide a perspective to the entire assembly. This book takes a different and refreshing approach. Most important, there has been no attempt to "update" the original language or to smooth over stylistic changes that are bound to occur in writings spanning more than a decade. These changes are, in fact, part of the appeal of the book. When an author writes as well as Weil, the spirit of the times is palpable in his language. Thus, as the times change, so does the language. Skipping back and forth over the 1970s, one can almost feel the difference (maybe it's the *Geist*).

From these remarks, it should be clear that this book is not a chronological compendium. Instead, it is divided into three thematic sections treating, respectively, "Museums," "Museums and the Law" and "Art, the Law, and the Market." Although there is an introduction, by far the most interesting current writing is found in the afterwords that Weil has chosen to follow many of the earlier writings.

These afterwords are particularly valuable since they permit the original texts to remain original — free of the footnoting, inserting and explaining that editors (and even authors) often feel are required. Sometimes these addenda are simply updates on legal problems resolved after the original was published. Others, however, show that the objectivity that Weil brings to his study of museums is also present in his review of his own writings. Following the text of an address delivered at Cooper Union in 1972 (those were the days, remember, when museum people had to apologize for collecting expensive paintings and attempt to explain why that money was not used to feed the poor), Weil comments, "In retrospect, I'm no longer sorry that so few people heard this [speech]. Some passages now strike me as simplistic — among them, the cursory discussion of scholarship and several of the references to trustees." Given the times, however, the original address, "An Inventory of Art Museum Roles," was on target and appropriate to its place in history.

As might be expected, considering the author's legal background, much of the book deals with legal issues confronting museums. Many of the complexities of museum administration in the 1980s are directly attributable to increasingly powerful regulatory agencies, to state attorneys general for whom real or imagined breaches of nonprofit fiduciary duty have meant increased public exposure and, of course, to an increasingly litigious society. One of the Beasts of the book's title is, of course, the law. But, while legal issues can be frustratingly time- and money-consuming, they, like the other pressures on museums that Weil has identified, are

Bruce H. Evans is director of the Dayton Art Institute in Ohio.

## BOOKS

not going to evaporate while museums play ostrich in the sands of time.

For years, Stephen Weil has been one of the most frequent and vociferous advocates for an increased understanding of the legal and moral responsibilities that museums must recognize and bear. The third essay in this book, "Toward Greater Museum Integrity ('The Snodgrass Sermon')," is a masterful example of his call for integrity.

Weil has written in MUSEUM NEWS, as well as numerous legal journals. He has addressed museum professionals at nearly every ALI-ABA Legal Problems of Museum Administration seminar. As is well documented in this book, his message for many years has been that the world within which our museums function is changing and will continue to change. Museums must be prepared not just to cope with change but to use it to advantage. There exists now a pervasive requirement of accountability that was unimaginable only a few years before Weil addressed the WAAM meeting in Los Angeles. It began in the late 1960s with artists demanding that museums balance their exhibitions by adopting quotas of women and minority artists. It continues today in the more subtle but much more ominous form of compliance with the myriad regulations that result from government funding.

Despite Weil's sobering insistence that museums must understand the pressures that confront them, the book manages to avoid imparting any feelings of hopelessness. It does, however, contain a warning, and that warning is clearly spelled out in sections that recount details of serious legal problems that have actually faced a number of our colleagues.

Fortunately, overriding this warning is the author's obvious respect for both museums and the law. If someone as articulate as Weil can manage to hold both sides in equal esteem, everything just *has* to turn out all right.

## BOOKS

### Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations

David L. Rados. Boston: Auburn House Publishing Company, 1981. 572 pp., hardbound, $24.95.

### Marketing for Public and Nonprofit Managers

Christopher H. Lovelock and Charles B. Weinberg. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1984. 607 pp., hardbound, $32.95.

*Reviewed by Chris Frederiksen*

Marketing is the current buzzword in the museum field. While commercial businesses are off searching for excellence or looking for Japanese profit techniques, museums are still integrating the basic concepts of marketing into their organizational structures. As the funding climate in museums changes and a new attitude emerges among the general public toward the desirability of self-sufficiency for our public institutions, active marketing becomes a logical alternative for generating increased awareness and support among nongovernmental constituencies.

The problems and challenges of management in museums and other nonprofit organizations received little attention until relatively recently. The introduction of the marketing concept is even more recent and has been subject to considerable resistance among professionals, some of whom consider the concept itself to be inappropriate for a museum and the strategies it requires positively unethical. The concept is one that can, however, no longer be ignored by museum professionals any more

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## BOOKS

than it can be ignored by doctors, dentists, architects or members of other professions in which its advent results from deregulation and the abandonment of historical ethical constraints.

Two new books of the current bumper crop that addresses the issue of marketing and nonprofits are *Marketing for Public and Nonprofit Managers* and *Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations.* They are textbooks, written by university professors, and their primary intended use is clearly in the classroom. Both are long, covering the subject matter in great detail and with the thoroughness one expects of a college text. They also cover the entire field of nonprofit marketing, from the problems of the U.S. Postal Service to the challenges of the smallest social welfare agency. Since museums represent a minor part of the nonprofit sector, they form a minor proportion of the examples used in each of these books. Even with these constraints, the books provide useful guidance in suggesting the steps that a museum must go through to achieve an organized marketing plan.

Rados' book, *Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations,* is organized into chapters that conclude with lengthy cases, generally derived from interviews by the author. The most interesting is an interview with a "Professional Giver," in this case an individual who manages the giving program for two generations of a wealthy family (no, the family name isn't revealed!). The subject of the interview clearly delineates the changing attitudes of givers, discussing the older generation with social service as an integral part of its upbringing and the younger generation with its proclivity for "out" causes. The interview stresses the importance of personal contacts and doing things of substance and makes some suggestions for approaching corporations. A couple of nuggets from this interview: In terms of recurring gifts, "Individuals tend to give to organizations they joined when they were young." As to the financial obligations of prominent board members, "If you call the shots, you have to pay."

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The one major museum case study included in this text is related to the general admission fees at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The case study traces the history of admission fees from 1970, when they were introduced, up to the present, showing the impact on attendance and discussing the introduction and acceptance of the discretionary fee. The author notes that in the first two years, exempt groups (which included museum members, children under 12, escorted groups of schoolchildren, the aged and visitors on official business) constituted about 60 percent of all museum visitors.

Both texts discuss in detail the issue of competition and how to deal with it. Particularly telling is a statement by the treasurer of a large museum quoted in the Rados book:

> I doubt that museums ever compete head-to-head. They only compete in areas, say, French porcelains or eighteenth-century English furniture. But there are people involved as well. They are in this for the ego kicks, for their psyches. They compete as individuals. They don't think of competition between their museum and another, but as between them and their counterpart at the other museum. . . . The driving force is not an institutional one. It is a personal one.

This insight is worth remembering when developing a museum marketing plan.

The Rados book is uncommonly professorial and pedantic. The narrative style makes it difficult for the reader to glean its few gems of wisdom. One keeps looking for checklists and specific examples to adapt, but they are few and far between. The book ventures unnecessarily and confusingly into advanced areas of economics and mathematics without much apparent relevance to the subject matter. For those readers seeking practical advice, this text will prove a disappointment.

In contrast, the recently published book by professors Lovelock and Weinberg is more structured and covers the entire gamut of marketing in a clear, practical and disciplined manner. While most of the examples do not relate to museums, they are well written and interesting to read. A surprisingly large number of examples, however, do relate to museums, which makes the book particularly helpful. While long and involved, the book is organized and captioned so that it is easy to isolate information of interest. Each chapter ends with a summary and an exhaustive list of references.

The text is divided into five parts. Part 1 gives an excellent overview of the role of marketing in the nonprofit sector. While the bad news seems to be the curtailment of government funding, a drying up of the traditional sources of volunteers and significant cost increases, the good news is that there is no lack of demand for the services of nonprofit organizations! Two important concepts emerge: (1) we live in a pluralist society—to protect this in the arts, the inescapable price will always be subsidy; (2) there is always tension between customer satisfaction and the organization's mission, and it is not appropriate in a museum to define mar-

keting as an appeal to the lowest common denominator.

Part 2 outlines a step-by-step approach to market segmentation and the conduct of a market research study. Included are several useful examples, checklists and suggestions. Parts 3 and 4 cover information on strategy, planning and positioning, how to conduct a marketing audit (including checklists of questions) and how to build a marketing plan (including a suggested format and index.)

The authors have used the last part of the book to cover implementation and have done an excellent job. The section includes discussions about organizing the marketing effort and making sure that your museum is highly responsive to its constituency. The chapter on "How to Attract Resources: Funds, Volunteers and Gifts" provides a concise overview of fund-raising techniques and how these should mesh with the marketing effort. Those who are attempting to organize fund-raising and volunteer programs will find several useful checklists here.

Perhaps the most comprehensive chapter in the book is the one on managing retail and catalog sales operations, which includes a museum store as its primary case study. The chapter provides clear guidelines for setting objectives, establishing institutional involvement and developing marketing, pricing and distribution strategies. If you're worried about the IRS, the rules about taxation on income from a book store, rental gallery and mail order operation are all explained.

The book sensibly concludes by suggesting the order in which various marketing programs should be attempted and recommending a way to create a market orientation within the institution.

*Marketing for Public and Nonprofit Managers* will prove a valuable addition to the library of the museum profession. It contains much information that can be adapted to productive use.

While both *Marketing for Public and Nonprofit Managers* and *Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations* are lengthy, academic and addressed to the entire nonprofit field, given these limitations they provide useful guidance for organizing a marketing effort, as we await more publications specifically directed to marketing in museums.

## Museum Masters: Their Museums and Their Influence

Edward Porter Alexander. Nashville, Tennessee: American Association for State and Local History, 1983. 420 pp., illus., bibliog., index, clothbound $22.95; $20.65 to AASLH members.

*Reviewed by James J. Heslin*

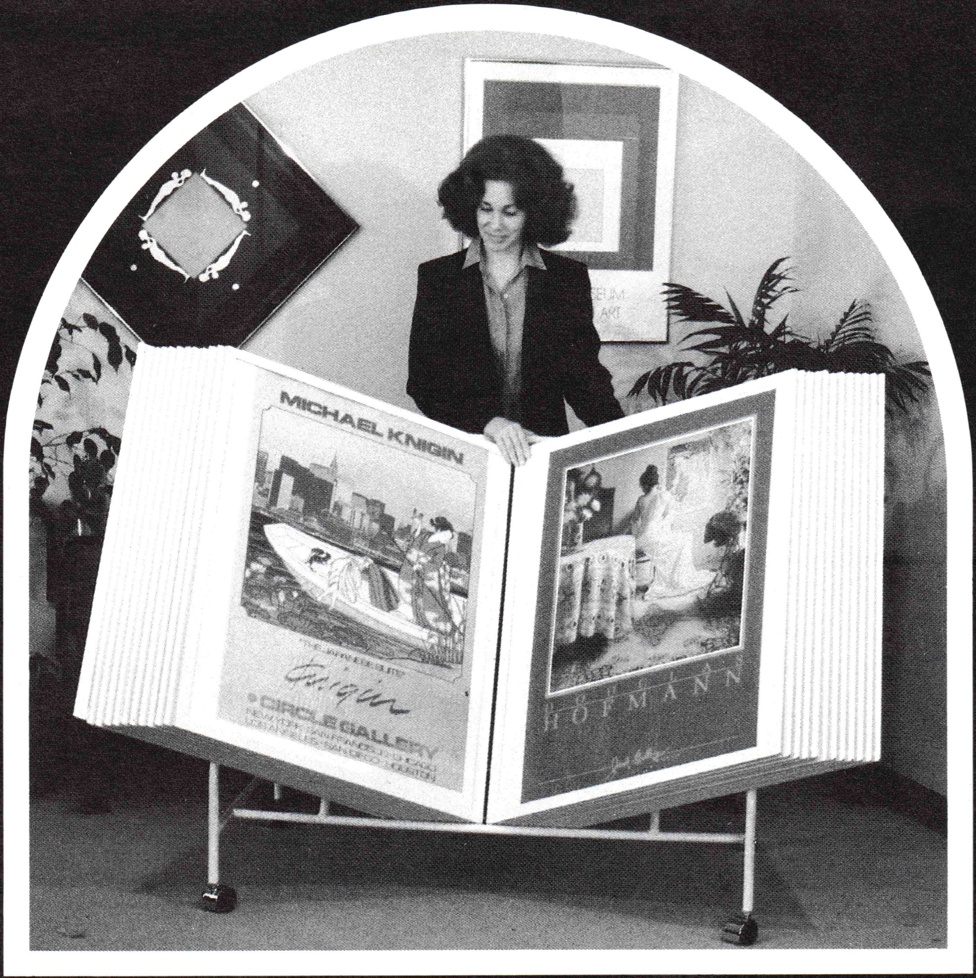
In *Museum Masters,* Edward Porter Alexander presents biographical sketches of 11 men and one woman whom he describes as "imaginative museum leaders." Alexander, a past president of the American Association of Museums, one of the founders and second president of the American Association for State and Local History and, for nearly 30 years, director of interpretation at Colonial Williamsburg, is uniquely qualified to add this book to the field of museum literature.

The 12 individuals included are a varied group, but they have one thing in common: the determination to make their institutions available to the general public — an innovative move for their time. In addition, these 12 were concerned about the needs of scholars and students and pioneered in the use of study collections and behind-the-scenes visits. This new emphasis on exhibitions and education represented a distinct change from previous indifference to these museum functions.

Sir Hans Sloane (1660-1753) was a wealthy English physician greatly interested in natural science. Sloane was a leader in his profession, but his fame rests on the large collection of dried plants, geological specimens, coins, medals, books, drawings and prints he amassed over the years. His holdings were well known by the time he decided to give his collection to the nation. Despite the initial reluctance of the monarch and various members of Parliament to assume the cost of housing and caring for Sloane's gift, the establishment of what was to become the British Museum finally received approval on June 7, 1753. Still one of the great treasures of the world, the British Museum continues to adapt to modern needs.

Charles Willson Peale (1741-1827), although best known as an artist, made a significant contribution to museums. In 1786 he opened a museum in his house in Philadelphia and charged an admission fee

James J. Heslin is director emeritus of the New-York Historical Society.


MICHAEL KNIGIN
CIRCLE GALLERY
HOFMANN

## BOOKS

of 25 cents. At its peak in 1816, the museum brought in nearly $12,000 from about 50,000 visitors. Peale viewed his museum as an educational resource for ordinary men and women. In addition to paintings and portraits, the museum included an amalgam of natural history and zoological items. Lively and educational, the exhibits were further enhanced by Peale's pioneering efforts in lighting.

Dominique Vivant Denon (1747-1825), first director of the Musée du Louvre, was a member of the provincial aristocracy and came from a well-to-do family that survived the French Revolution. It is said that Denon met the young Napoleon at Tallyrand's house and that Napoleon's first wife, Josephine de Beauharnais, often entertained him. As Napoleon became famous, Denon's career advanced. Napoleon's victories, with their consequent spoils, brought large collections to the Louvre. The emperor had little interest in art, but he viewed the Louvre as a symbol of French glory and supported Denon in his collecting and exhibition activities. After Napoleon's downfall, the European powers previously defeated by him demanded the return of their treasures, and Denon, reluctantly, acquiesced. While director, Denon attracted thousands to the Louvre by means of frequent exhibit changes made possible, at least in part, by the influx of masterpieces resulting from Napoleonic victories.

Sir William Jackson Hooker (1785-1865) put Kew Gardens on the map. The Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew in London, according to Alexander, should be viewed in the context of the gradual opening of special collections to the public. Hooker was born in Norwich, often called the City of Gardens, and he acquired an interest in botany from his father, an amateur botanist. Thanks to a bequest from his godfather, the young Hooker was able to pursue his collecting interests. For some years he taught botany at the University of Glasgow, and served as director of the Glasgow Botanic Garden. He was, however, eager

to be in London, and at the age of 55 he managed to obtain the post of royal gardener at Kew. His friendship with Queen Victoria and Prince Albert aided his administration at Kew. Hooker admitted visitors every weekday afternoon and allowed them to wander about freely. The public responded enthusiastically. Hooker's outstanding contribution, however, was the creation of the Museum of Economic Botany within the botanical gardens. Plants from around the world were sent to Kew, improved and then distributed to various parts of the British Empire. For example, seeds from the cinchona tree were sent to India and Africa, superior strains of tobacco went to Natal and wild rubber plants from Brazil were domesticated in Ceylon and Malaya. Hooker's promotion of economic botany made the gardens at Kew an important force in the economy of the British Empire.

Sir Henry Cole (1808-82) was a close friend of Prince Albert, and this relationship proved to be of great help to Cole in his career. Cole was a man of unusual versatility, and his wide-ranging interests included watercolor painting, medieval art and wood engraving. He was an enthusiastic musician as well. Cole also designed pottery and, in fact, one of his tea sets was used by Queen Victoria. It was, however, his work in connection with the Great Exhibition of the Industry of All Nations in 1851, at the Crystal Palace in London, that brought him fame. After that event, Cole continued to serve as Britain's au-

thority on industrial exhibitions, and in 1852 he was an advisor to the planners of the Crystal Palace in New York City. From about 1856 until his retirement in 1873, Cole was associated with the South Kensington Museum complex, both as an officer and chief force in its development. In 1899 this institution was renamed the Victoria and Albert Museum. Cole's association with the South Kensington Museum complex testifies to his belief, shared by Prince Albert, that museums should have practical utility.

Ann Pamela Cunningham (1816-75) is cited for her important contribution to the historic house movement. Her project, the restoration and maintenance of George Washington's Mount Vernon, represents a triumph of determination and will. In an era when few women held public roles, Cunningham, at the age of 37, formed a woman's organization that helped to raise money to purchase Mount Vernon from George Washington's great-grand nephew, Augustine Washington, Jr., and to commence work on its restoration. In the classic Victorian mode, Cunningham was plagued by illness and "often confined to her couch," despite which she raised funds by means both astute and imaginative. She even surmounted the difficulties caused by the Civil War when Federal and Confederate forces surrounded Mount Vernon. Her efforts ultimately resulted in the establishment of a privately controlled, self-perpetuating cultural organization that became a model for similar projects throughout the country.

Prussian-born Wilhelm Bode (1845-1929) received a law degree in 1867 and, for a time, expressed interest in studying geology. His true love, however, was art, and he persuaded his father to let him study art in Berlin. In 1872 Bode became assistant at the Prussian Royal Picture Gallery in Berlin. By 1904 he had climbed the curatorial ladder to become director of the new Kaiser Friedrich Museum and, a year later, general director of the Berlin Museums. Prior to 1871, Berlin's museums attracted few visitors, but the founding of the German Empire in that year spurred a desire to make Berlin the cultural equal of Paris and London. To this end, the government generously appropriated money for the acquisition of art works and for the construction of spacious buildings. Kaiser Wilhelm II was a strong supporter of Bode, and this support enabled Bode to make acquisitions without the necessity of coping with bureaucratic red tape. Bode's contribution to the development of Berlin's museums was outstanding in many respects. Of particular importance was his encouragement of the new rising industrial and commercial class to become collectors and donors. By 1914, when World War I began, Berlin had become one of the world's great art centers. At the close of World War II, however, Berlin's museums were divided between West Berlin and East Berlin, to the considerable inconvenience of scholars and art lovers.

The outdoor museum, brainchild of Arthur Hazelius (1833-1901), has spread around the world. Hazelius, born in Stockholm, was imbued by his father with a love of Swedish tradition. In his youth Hazelius took long hikes in the countryside and became interested in Swedish folkways. As he grew older and came to fear that the industrial revolu-

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tion transforming Europe would alter the cultural variety of Swedish life, he began to collect old costumes, furniture, tools and other objects in order to provide a history of everyday life in Sweden. Inevitably, he needed space to accommodate and exhibit his collection, and in 1873, he opened the Museum of Scandinavian Ethnography in Stockholm. In 1891, outside of Stockholm, Hazelius established the world's first open air-museum, which he named Skansen (Redoubt) after a 17th-century fortification near the site. This museum allowed Hazelius to present not only old buildings and furnishings but also costumed guides, household crafts, folk music and dance. In effect, this was a people's park, and Hazelius encouraged its recreational use. This new folk museum stimulated a revival of national and community pride, and before long there were similar museums throughout Scandinavia.

George Brown Goode (1851-96), in the author's view, merits the title of father of the modern American museum. At the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia in 1876 Goode supervised exhibits illustrating the animal and fishery resources of the United States. With a solid background in natural science, he began his career as curator of a new museum being installed in the Orange Judd Hall of Natural Science at Wesleyan University. In 1878, Goode became curator of the United States National Museum in Washington and in the following year was appointed assistant director. Goode was determined to create a new kind of national museum that would emphasize the resources of the earth and the achievements of human activity. In brief, he envisioned a museum of the history of culture. He was convinced that the museum was a powerful force for education of the public. Through his speeches and writings and the improvements in exhibitions at the Smithsonian that incorporated his pro-

# Experienced museum professionals available. Will provide objective, practical, and sympathetic consultation. At no cost to your institution.

# MAP

## Museum Assessment Program

All museums face a common challenge: How to improve operations and programs in the face of existing, and often limited, resources. Since 1980, over 750 museums have turned to the Museum Assessment Program (MAP) for answers. Operated by the American Association of Museums, MAP is a general consultation service designed to help museums reach their full potential.

### MORE THAN 750 MUSEUMS HAVE BENEFITED

Museums find that MAP offers practical consultation that is truly valuable. Many have written to say that MAP has helped them set priorities, capitalize on their strengths, build a base for long-range planning, improve their fundraising or prepare for accreditation.

Here are a few examples:

*"The consultant's overall view of the society and its operations gave us a feeling of accomplishment and pride that we hadn't had before."* — Marcia T. Schuster, Blue Earth County Historical Society, Mankato, Minnesota

*"The value of MAP and the guidance of our consultant will assist us into the future as we attempt to establish a true standard of excellence."* — Louis Zona, Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio

*"Membership has been given a needed boost."* — Ann McLaughlin, Canal Fulton Heritage Society, Canal Fulton, Ohio

*"The direct involvement of the trustees in this process has enhanced understanding of the museum's needs and expectation and will aid major projects like image-building and fundraising."* — Steve Anderson, Fort Nisqually, Tacoma, Washington

### GRANTS ARE AVAILABLE

MAP need not cost your museum a penny — you can participate regardless of previous budget commitments. Grants are readily available from the Institute of Museum Services (IMS) to cover the $600 cost of the program. The grant application, like the entire MAP process, is short and uncomplicated — a great relief to busy museum professionals.

### HOW MAP WORKS

**Step 1:**
The museum sends a brief application card along with a copy of its tax-exempt determination letter.

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**Step 5:**
A written report, diagnosing strengths and weaknesses, is submitted to the museum, together with supplemental information about appropriate resources to help initiate improvements.

The entire process takes five to eight months.

### WRITE TODAY

For further information and an application, just mail in the coupon. Or, if you like, call Kim Igoe or Susan Graziano at the AAM, (202) 338-5300.

*Take advantage of MAP and help your museum reach its full potential.*

Name

Position

Institution

Street

City State Zip

Telephone

Mail to:
MAP
American Association of Museums
1055 Thomas Jefferson Street, NW
Washington, DC 20007 MN684

gressive ideas of design, he enriched the museum profession. It is likely that Goode's impact on the museum world would have been even greater had it not been for his early death at age 45.

It is not unusual today to visit zoos that have moats rather than bars and fences, but when Carl Hagenbeck (1844-1913) built his zoological garden, the Tierpark, at Stellingen in Hamburg, this approach was innovative. His zoological garden, opened in 1907, was the only privately owned zoo in Germany. This zoo expressed Hagenbeck's philosophy about wild animals in captivity — he believed in allowing them maximum liberty within as spacious limits as possible in surroundings that approximated their natural habitat. Although Hagenbeck had little formal education, he considered himself a naturalist, and it is no exaggeration to call him, as the secretary of London's prestigious Zoological Society did, "the greatest zoological garden creator in the world."

Oskar von Miller (1855-1934), an electrical engineer, was fascinated by industrial museums, and he resolved to found a museum of science and technology in Germany. Because of Miller's exceptional ability in his field, he was well known to both private industry and government, and he turned to these sources for the financial help he needed to implement his plan for the Deutsches Museum in Munich. His museum was a chronological encyclopedia of the history of science and technology. His exhibits were noteworthy for their ability to explain technology in an exciting and enjoyable manner to the general public, especially young people.

John Cotton Dana (1856-1929), founder and director of the Newark Museum in New Jersey, is usually thought of as one of the major figures in the world of librarianship. He was that, of course, but he was also interested in museums, and the Newark Museum was, in a sense, an extension of the kind of public service he introduced in the Free Public Library of Newark, where he was librarian. Dana began the museum on the upper floors of the library building, and it remained there until a separate building was opened in 1926. Dana was determined to make education and interpretation the museum's chief functions; in fact, he disliked the term "museum" and preferred "institute of visual instruction." Above all, Dana believed that the museum should be "active," with changing exhibits, extensive publicity and loans of material to individuals and groups.

It is quite possible that some museum professionals might select a few different or additional figures as museum leaders, but Alexander is convincing in his choices. This book is clearly the result of extensive research. The style is scholarly and readable, the illustrations are apt and the bibliography is comprehensive. Alexander states, "Museums are learning centers with a long and vital tradition of cultural contributions." They are indeed, and, so too, this book is a cultural contribution. Δ



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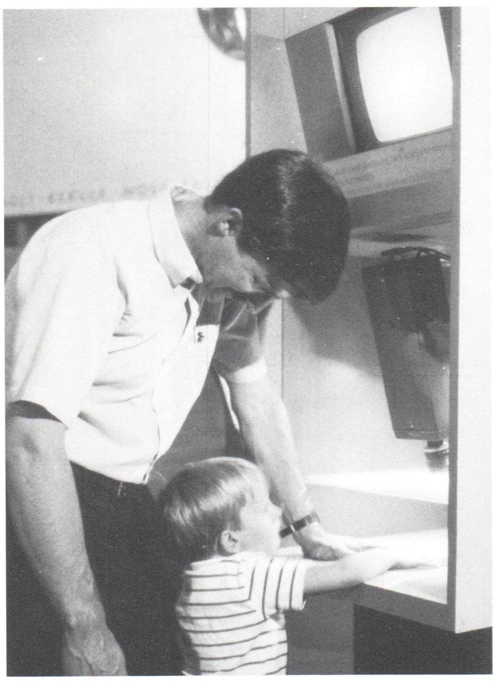

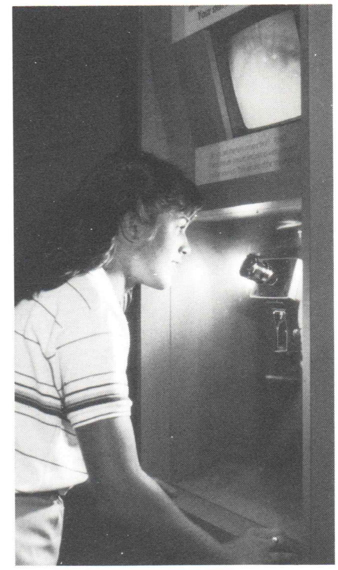

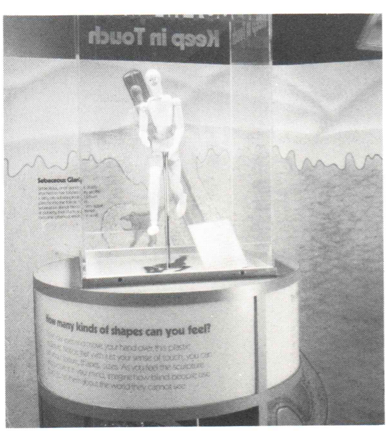



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